MONDAY
April 7, 2025

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

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RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 56 • No. 82

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

Shri. Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

FROM THE HOUSE OF MYSORE SANDAL SOAP

Shri. D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

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Another remarkable year for KSDL with outstanding results in 2024-25

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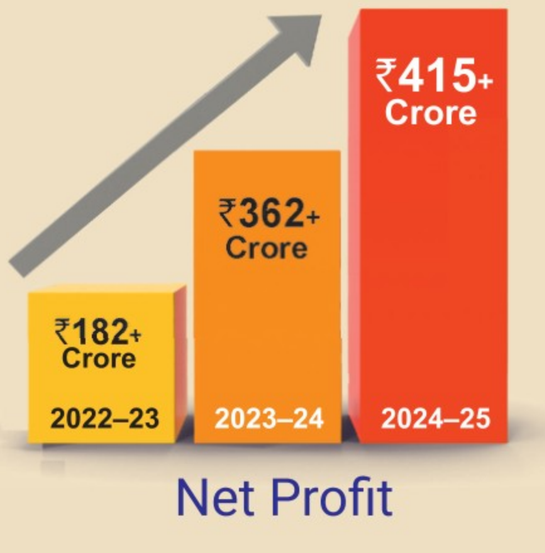

Net Profit

Turnover Growth

2022–23	₹1,375 Cr
2023–24	₹1,571 Cr
2024–25	₹1,788 Cr

What's Driving the Growth

Production Efficiency
Over **110%** achievement across all years

Exports
Present in **25** countries, targeting **80** countries by **2026**

The company achieved a **29% CAGR** over five years and delivered the highest profit in its history.

Launch of **Mysore Sandal Wave Series:** premium soaps, pooja items, agarbathis, sambrani, lamp oil, packaged water

Key Highlights

- **Turnover up by ₹412 Cr in 2 years**
- **Net Profit more than doubled**
- **Dividends more than doubled**
- **Daily output: 1.8 million soaps**
- **Soaps account** for **70%** of total production
- **Grow More Sandalwood:** Partnered with **713+** farmers across **3,813 acres** for commercial cultivation
- Partnering with **e-commerce platforms** to drive **₹100 Cr** annual sales online
- Organizing the **'Mysore Sandal Soap Mela'** across the state to enhance reach and promotions

Product Diversification

New launches include:

- 7 hand sanitizer variants
- 5 hand wash products
- 3 shower gels
- 10 new soap grades
- Aqua Mineral Water

Vision 2030

- Targeting **₹5,000 Cr turnover by 2030**
- New production unit in **Vijayapura**
- **Higher exports** and an expanding presence in the North-East, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Jammu & Kashmir.

As enshrined in our Constitution - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

A big thank you to all the workers, unions, staff, officers, General Manager-Administration, General Manager-Finance, for their valuable contributions to this wonderful achievement of the organization.

Dr. S. Selvakumar, IAS, Principal Secretary
Department of Industries & Commerce

Dr. Prashanth PKM, IFS, Managing Director
Karnataka Soaps & Detergents Ltd.

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NEED FOR TRANSPARENCY

Only 12% of HC judges have declared assets

NEWS » PAGE 12

'HANDS OFF' PROTESTS

Thousands rally against Trump's policies

WORLD » PAGE 16

SECURITY REVIEW

Shah reaches J&K for three-day visit

NEWS » PAGE 12

WORLD HEALTH DAY

Preventive medicine for a healthy India

'One that can heal before the need to heal'

EDITORIAL » PAGE 10

STAR TURN

Chhetri fires BFC into ISL final

SPORTS » PAGE 18

Stalin asks Modi to allay fears over delimitation

The Hindu Bureau
UDHAGAMANDALAM/ COIMBATORE

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to allay the "legitimate fears" of the people of the southern States regarding the delimitation exercise.

Mr. Stalin, at an event in Udhagamandalam, called upon Mr. Modi to make a promise that southern States that had successfully managed to control their populations would not see their representation in Parliament reduced.

The Chief Minister reiterated the demand in Coimbatore on Sunday evening, saying the Prime Minister failed to address the concerns of Tamil Nadu over the proposed delimitation exercise.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

New Pamban bridge an engineering wonder: PM

Modi inaugurates India's first vertical lift sea bridge built over the Palk Strait at a cost of ₹531 crore, and flags off new train services; he says it will have positive effects on the lives of lakhs of people

S. Sundar
RAMESWARAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the new Pamban railway bridge, which connects the Rameswaram island off the Tamil Nadu coast with Ramanathapuram on the mainland.

Constructed by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. at a cost of ₹531 crore, the 2.08-km bridge over the Palk Strait features a 72.5-metre vertical lift span that can be raised to a height of 17 metres, facilitating smooth ship movement underneath while improving rail connectivity.

Mr. Modi flagged off new train services between Rameswaram and Tambaram, Chennai, laid the foundation stone for the four-lane work on the section of National Highway no. 40 from Walajahpet, near Chennai, in Tamil Nadu to the Andhra Pradesh boundary, and dedicated three other four-lane highway projects in Tamil Nadu.

The Prime Minister described the new bridge, India's first vertical lift sea bridge, as an "engineering wonder" that "brought together technology and tradition".

With the completion of the bridge, a long-pending demand of the people had been fulfilled, he said.

"The Pamban rail bridge will support both ease of business and ease of travel. It will have positive effects on the lives of lakhs of people," the Prime Minister said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Milestone structure: Prime Minister Modi waves as a vessel passes under the new Pamban bridge at Rameswaram on Sunday. ANI

'Teething trouble' in lift of bridge causes concern

RAMESWARAM
The vertical lift span of the new Pamban Rail Bridge, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, caused concern when the centre span became stuck for some time as it was being lowered. A railway official dismissed the issue as a minor teething problem. » PAGE 12

Baby elected CPI(M) general secretary at Madurai congress

S. Anandan
MADURAI

The 24th congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which concluded in Madurai on Sunday, elected M.A. Baby, Polit Bureau member since 2012, as the party general secretary for the next three years.

Mr. Baby, former Education and Culture Minister in Kerala, is the second leader from the Kerala unit to helm the party nationally, after E.M.S. Namboodiripad.

The congress elected an 85-member Central Committee (CC) – the highest decision-making body of the party – with 30 new faces. At its first meeting, the CC elected an 18-member Polit Bureau (PB), its executive authority.

The decision to strictly adhere to the age cap of 75 for party positions saw Prakash Karat (who was coordinating the PB), Brinda Karat, Manik Sarkar, Subhashini Ali, G. Ramakrishnan, and Surjya Kanta Mishra step down from the PB.

The congress gave the nod for another extension to Pinarayi Vijayan in the PB in view of his continuing responsibility as the Chief Minister of Kerala.

M. A. Baby

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12
'TOWARDS THE MASSES' » PAGE 13

NEARBY

Bandipur: People launch campaign

MYSURU
The resistance to the renewed efforts to lift the night traffic ban through Bandipur Tiger reserve appears to be building as citizens launched the 'Walk for Bandipur' campaign on Sunday amidst growing concerns. » PAGE 4

BJP campaign from today

BENGALURU
Building further on its day-and-night dharna, the BJP is embarking upon a 16-day State tour of its leaders for the campaign titled 'Janakrosha yatre' against price rise from Monday. » PAGE 4

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGES 7 & 9

Second airport: AAI team coming today to inspect three sites

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A multi-disciplinary team from the Airports Authority of India (AAI) will be visiting the State on Monday to hold discussions with State government officials and also inspect the three locations which have been identified for Bengaluru's second international greenfield airport.

The government has already identified three locations for the proposed airport of which two are on Kanakapura Road and one on the Nelamangala-Kunigal Road. Sources said that the AAI would hold discussions with State government officials, and the Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (KSIIDC) would be making a presentation on technical details of the proposed airport before the delegation.

Documents such as revenue map of these sites, weather reports of the last 10 years, detailed images of the sites' geographic features, maps from the Survey of India, and other operational details would be presented before the AAI officials.

This will be followed by a visit to the three shortlisted locations during which the AAI team is expected to inspect the sites and decide whether they are suitable for the development of a green field airport.

"The AAI team's visit is scheduled between April 7 and 9. During the visit to the proposed sites, they will be looking into various technical aspects like weather, terrain, connectivity, etc.," the sources said.

> The proposed airport has to have flat land which is the foremost requirement; there should be no mountains in the approach area.
>
> Aviation Expert

They added that after the AAI team submitted its report on the three sites, the State government would conduct a feasibility report and finalise the location for the upcoming airport. The KSIIDC had already paid a fee of ₹1.21 crore to AAI for this purpose.

"The proposed airport has to have flat land which is the foremost requirement; there should be no mountains in the approach area. Another aspect is weather as there cannot an airport where there is consistently bad weather. There should not be too many waterbodies around the airport. There should be good surface connectivity, not just roads but also rail," said an aviation expert on the key requirements for an international greenfield airport.

The second airport for Bengaluru can only become operational after May 2033, due to an agreement between the Bangalore International Airport Ltd., which is the operator of the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), and the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

As per the agreement, no airport can operate within an aerial distance of 150 km of KIA before its 25th anniversary which falls in May 2033.

Splendrous

The illumination of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru was inaugurated on Sunday in the presence of Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, among others. The iconic structure will be illuminated every Saturday and Sunday and the general public will be allowed inside the structure. K. MURALI KUMAR

Hurdles in uploading ECs hit property transactions in city

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

Several e-khata holders in Bengaluru are struggling to make property transactions as Assistant Revenue Officials (AROs) are citing technical hurdles in uploading Encumbrance Certificate (EC). The EC is mandatory to carry out land transactions.

When the e-khata website was launched on October 1, 2024, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had made EC mandatory for securing e-khata. Later, the BBMP removed the EC from the list of mandatory documents. Owners are now securing e-khata without EC.

Rakesh A., a property owner, told *The Hindu*, "Although it's been a month since I obtained an e-khata after paying the stipulated fee, I have been running from pillar to post to sell my land. When the EC was submitted in the sub-registrar's office, the ARO said the staff is unable to upload the document due to a technical error. The ARO also told me that property owners should upload EC during the process of obtaining e-khata, Since that was not done, it is one of the reasons why the system is not allowing uploading of EC now. I have been visiting the sub-registrar's office for the last month, but to no avail," he said.

Mr. Rakesh said the sole purpose of securing e-khata was to sell his property, but he is unable to carry out the land transaction.

A non-resident Indian (NRI), who has property in Bengaluru, said his associate in Bengaluru spent more than two months to secure the e-khata but now he is faced with a bigger hurdle. Despite submitting the latest EC to the office, the ARO is citing some errors while securing e-khata. The ARO further claimed that the technical errors disallowed uploading of the EC.

"I want to carry out a release deed for the property I own in the name of my wife. Unless the EC is uploaded, nothing can be done. The government must resolve this because many are facing the same problem," they claimed.

A senior BBMP official in the Revenue Department said, "This has come to the notice of the BBMP, but EC cannot be made optional for land transactions. It's a key to avoid fraud. We are contemplating devising a strategy to eliminate delay and corruption at the lower levels."

Owners can secure e-khata without an Encumbrance Certificate. But the EC cannot be made optional for land transactions, as it is a key document to prevent fraud.

> Although it's been a month since I obtained an e-khata after paying the stipulated fee, I have been running from pillar to post to sell my land.
>
> **RAKESH A.**
> property owner

Property tax collection in rural areas more than doubles in three years

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The inclusion of more properties under the tax net in rural areas has led to a record revenue collection over the last three years, with the tax collection more than doubling during this period.

While a total of ₹571.94 crore had been collected in 2022-23 as property tax, it has shot up to ₹1,272.43 crores in the just ending 2024-25 financial year. A property of tax of ₹767.87 crore had been collected during 2023-24.

'Silent revolution in rural governance'

"The Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj has been driving a silent revolution in rural governance. We are strengthening panchayat economies through record -breaking revenue collection," RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge said on social media platform 'X'.

Priyank Kharge

In the last 18 months, we have added 13,91,678 properties to the tax register, says Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge

He said, "In the last 18 months, we have added 13,91,678 properties to the tax register, expanding the panchayat property base to 1,43,91,438 properties. And we are just getting started."

He said that with bold reforms under way in E-Swathu (rural property management platform), the department is setting the stage for even greater revenue generation, empowering panchayats to investing better infrastructure, stronger citizen services deliveries and more responsive governance at the grassroots.

Mr. Kharge said, "We are not just strengthening villages, we are also powering the engines of Karnataka's next economic leap."

It may be noted that the State government has taken up a one-time measure to provide e-khatas to properties in unauthorised layouts in rural areas.

This is to bring these properties under property tax network so that the resources for the panchayats increase.

Making sense of the double-edged sword called 'retired out'

The move made famous by Ashwin for the Royals in 2022 has been a regular feature in T20s both internationally and at the franchise level; albeit a tactical option, prudence and emotion jostle for pre-eminence which might have been the case with Mumbai Indians and Tilak Verma

FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

R. Kaushik

It was a routine Wednesday night – inasmuch as a Wednesday night with India playing a Twenty20 International can be routine – until it wasn't.

The series had been won and lost. In Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli's comeback to the 20-over scheme of things internationally in India's final engagements before the T20 World Cup, the hosts had taken a winning 2-0 lead over Afghanistan. Kohli had missed the first game due to personal reasons while Rohit had been dismissed without scoring in both victories, run out in the first match in Mohali and bowled in the next in Indore.

For both, 17 January 2024 was an important date - their last T20I before the World Cup in the Americas. Kohli was dismissed for a first-ball duck, one of four wickets India lost in the PowerPlay. At 22 for four with 93 deliveries remaining, everything pointed to a consolation maiden T20I victory for Afghanistan over their Big Brother.

Until Rohit decided it was time to show everyone who the boss was. With Rinku Singh for company, the captain initiated a rescue act. And more than five years after his previous T20I hundred, the opener added a fifth to his tally, an unbeaten 121 off 69 which, coupled with Rinku's 69 not out, hauled India to 212 for four.

Afghanistan replied in kind through their top order and finished on 212 for six, sending the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium crowd into raptures and setting up a Super Over. Where the Afghans batted first and made 16. Thanks to Rohit's two sixes, India reached 15 with one ball to spare. The skipper was at the non-striker's end after a single off the fifth ball, had a word with the umpire and trudged off. Rinku replaced him in the middle, ostensibly because he was the quicker runner. Yashasvi Jaiswal managed just one off the last ball, sending the match spiralling to a second Super Over. Rohit Sharma, presumably retired out, a tactical move.

Wait. Forget about presumably. It seems he hadn't retired out. Because otherwise, how could he have come out to bat in the second Super Over? The rules clearly stipulate that a batter who has been dismissed – in any mode, which includes retired out – is ineligible to bat in any subsequent Super Over. Oh well...

In the immediacy of that game – oh, India won in the second Super Over, with Rohit slamming a six and a four in his team's 11 for two, and Ravi Bishnoi picking up two wickets in the first three deliveries to derail Afghanistan – head coach Rahul Dravid practically acknowledged that Rohit had retired himself out. "Taking himself out was Ashwin-level thinking. That's Ash-level thinking," Dravid, who thinks little of repeating himself when he feels the need to stress a point, told the host broadcaster.

Novelty factor

The Rohit retired out or not drama was laid to rest then and there, especially with Afghanistan opting not to make an issue of it. But the Dravid reference to Ashwin, R. Ashwin, lingered. After all, the off-spinner with novelty and creativity coursing through his veins was the first player to be retired out in the Indian Premier League in April 2022, while batting for Rajasthan Royals against Lucknow Super Giants.

Ashwin had made 28 off 23, two sixes, when he walked off; his team was on 135 for five with ten deliveries left. More than anything else, that decision was influenced by the need to have a younger, faster partner for the marauding Shimron Hetmyer, though that shouldn't have been a consideration, considering the West Indian left-hander smashed six sixes in his 36-ball 59 not out. RR added 30 in those 10 balls to finish on 165 for six, decisive given that they trooped out winners by three runs.

Further retirements came the next season – Punjab Kings' Atharva Taide (55 off 42) against Delhi Capitals, and Sai Sudharsan (43 off 31) for Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 2 against Mumbai Indians, with mixed fortunes. Taide's 'dismissal' triggered a collapse and Punjab went down by 15 runs. Post Sudharsan's retirement at the end of the 19th over, Gujarat amassed 19 runs in an eventually comfortable 62-run hammering of Mumbai.

Interestingly, neither Ashwin nor Taide and Sudharsan had dawdled during their knocks. Ashwin struck at 121.73 (not flash, agreed), Taide's strike-rate was 130.95 and Sudharsan had scored even faster, at 138.70 runs per 100 balls faced. Yet, they were called back by their respective decision-making group for tactical reasons. Ashwin was hailed, like he has been for so many things over the last decade and a half, for walking off, Rajasthan were commended for thinking on their feet. Taide and Sudharsan almost flew under the radar because, well, they are not Ashwin.

But Friday at the sprawling Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow was bereft of commendation, of feel-good, of a pat on the back for the Mumbai Indians management. Not because they went down by 12 runs to hosts Lucknow Super Giants, but because of their move to retire out Tilak Varma, the gifted left-hander who admittedly was struggling to get the ball off the square.

Tilak is a wonderful talent, supremely level-headed for one who is still only 22. He is confident and high on self-belief. A few months back, he approached T20I skipper Suryakumar Yadav during the series in South Africa and asked for the captain's No. 3 position in the batting order. When Suryakumar obliged, Tilak justified his request with successive hundreds in Centurion and Johannesburg. How about that, people?

In 25 T20Is, Tilak averages 49.93, his strike-rate is a wonderful 155.07. In the IPL, where all his 42 matches since his debut in 2022 have come for five-time former champions Mumbai, his average is a healthy 39.09, his strike-rate a more-than-acceptable 143.14. He is at once one for the present and the future, an explosive bundle of power and aesthetics, a new-age player who is steeped in old-school values.

But this hasn't been a great season for the left-hander. Before Friday, he had made 70 runs in three innings, striking at 114.75. The usual fluency peeped out only in patches, one of the reasons why Mumbai have struggled to make an impact. In Lucknow, despite his best efforts, he struggled and struggled, limping to 25 off 23 - the target was a testing 204 - when Mumbai finally decided they had had enough. Like he had been when Sudharsan was retired out in 2023, Hardik Pandya was again at the non-striker's end. Like then, when he was the GT skipper, he was again in a leadership role, helming MI campaign.

Tilak came out after 18.5 overs, with 24 required off seven deliveries. Replacing him, and on strike, was Mitchell Santner, the New Zealand captain who had done battle against Pandya in the final of the Champions Trophy in Dubai just about four weeks previously.

Santner is primarily a left-arm spinner but he is no mug with the bat. He averages 26 in Tests and has struck 107 sixes in 217 T20s, boasting a strike-rate of 130.35. Not Tilak level, true, but certainly better than the level Tilak displayed on the night. It was a move that didn't come off, because Santner faced just two of the last seven deliveries. And in that is a tale in itself.

The Kiwi skipper bunted two runs off his first ball, then watched as Pandya smashed the first ball of the last over, from Avesh Khan, over cover for six. Now 16 off 5. The next ball produced a couple - 14 off 4. Jangle, jangle.

Pandya tonked the next ball to deep square-leg but did not take the single. He sent Santner back, believing that if anyone could get them over the line, it was him. That didn't quite work out. Just one run off the next three deliveries meant Mumbai slumped to their third loss in four matches.

If Santner was to be denied the strike in the last over because of Pandya's belief in himself more than his partner, then why was he summoned in the first place? And if all that Pandya's partner had to do was run between the wickets, couldn't Tilak have managed that? After all, while the big strokes were proving elusive, that shouldn't be a deterrent to pace over the 22 yards, correct?

Pandya and head coach Mahela Jayawardene have received plenty of flak for retiring Tilak out. After all, the ends justify the means, and because Mumbai ended up on the losing side, this was a move open to criticism. Had Pandya (and/or Santner) pulled the fat out of the fire, it would have been eulogised and celebrated as a masterstroke, such is the wisdom hindsight confers on us. Subsequent damage control has surfaced in the form of 'sources' revealing that Tilak had a 'finger niggle' (a new one that) in his left hand, which precipitated his exit from the middle. If that was the case, why wasn't he retired out a little earlier? Why was Santner not given the luxury of a few more deliveries? Why did Mumbai leave it so late before deciding that it wasn't going to be Tilak's night? And if they had chosen to believe in him until 18.5 overs, maybe they could have just stuck with him, come what may?

These are questions to which there will be no satisfactory answers, depending on perspective. Retiring out is a tactical, strategic, legal option but more than in most things, prudence and emotion jostle for pre-eminence in this instance. Feel for Tilak, sure, but don't throw Pandya and Jayawardene under the bus. After all, this is the world of T20 cricket, where emotional rollercoasters are an everyday guarantee.

THE GIST

- Ashwin was the first player to be retired out in the Indian Premier League in April 2022, while batting for Rajasthan Royals against Lucknow Super Giants. Rajasthan were commended for thinking on their feet.
- But Friday at the sprawling Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow was bereft of commendation, for the Mumbai Indians management because of their move to retire out Tilak Varma.
- Don't throw Pandya and Jayawardene under the bus. After all, this is the world of T20 cricket, where emotional rollercoasters. are an everyday guarantee.

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2024

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BU students struggle without designated bus stops

There are three points inside the varsity where buses usually stop. However, there is neither any signage nor any infrastructure at these points

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

A walk inside the Bangalore University's (BU) Jnana Bharathi campus reveals small groups of people standing on either side of the road at three points. At first look, it looks like a gathering, but when a Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus stops in front of them is when these points can be recognised as bus stops.

People wait for a bus inside the Bangalore University Jnana Bharathi campus. K. MURALI KUMAR

There are three points inside the university where buses usually stop - near the Civil Engineering Department, near the library, and near the administration block. However, there is neither any signage nor any infrastructure to indicate that they are bus stops. Students are forced to stand and await buses irrespective of weather conditions for their commute within and out of the campus.

On a weekday afternoon in summer, the temperature was hovering over 30 degrees Celsius and many students at the university had just finished their examination.

One Master of Arts student was waiting for a bus near the Civil Engineering Department to go home in Nayandahalli. "It has become a habit for us to wait for buses like this. During summer, we can at least find a tree to stand in its shade, but when it rains, we must manage with umbrellas and if there is too much wind, then we get drenched inevitably," she said. Students also said that there is no guarantee about the buses stopping at these points. "They rarely stop near the library. They only stop if someone wants to get down," a student said.

Even those who stay in BU hostels are dependent on buses as the hostels are approximately over a km away from some departments like microbiology or fine arts. The students thus say that a shuttle service, a buggy system or e-bikes should be set up inside the campus for internal commute.

"My department is near the administration block. But if I need to buy some food or get some photocopies, I must go to the other end of the campus. The frequency of BMTC buses is not great during the afternoon hours and we are forced to walk or wait for a long duration for buses on roads as there are no bus shelters. The university should provide some kind of internal commute options like private universities do," shared a student pursuing his postgraduation in biology. Male students also said that while female students can commute for free with Shakti scheme, they should shell out at least ₹20 to 30 every day to travel inside the campus.

According to an official in the university, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has not set up bus shelters even after multiple requests. Jayakara S.M. Vice-Chancellor of BU, said that the new bus shelters will be set up on the campus shortly under corporate social responsibility initiatives. "We are in talks with some companies who want to set up tech powered e-bus stops with all modern facilities on the campus. We will reach a decision shortly."

Most of these issues on the campus are not new. In October 2022, students and staff members of the university held demonstrations for days after Shilpa Shri, a 21-year-old postgraduate student, died after sustaining major injuries while trying to board a bus. There was a demand to ban entry of private vehicles into the university and implementation of other road safety measures including designated bus shelters.

"We placed our demands before the authorities as well as university officials in 2022. A lot of them remain unfulfilled. For a university with such a history, it is upsetting that we do not have something as basic as bus shelters, pedestrian crossings and drinking water even after us demanding them so many times," said Lokesh Ram, vice-president of Bangalore University Postgraduate and Research Scholars' Union.

Students frequently still face issues like vehicles not stopping at pedestrian crossing zones and walking through traffic congestion on the campus. "During peak hours in the morning, we must wait at least 10 minutes to cross the road near the administrative block. Vehicles never stop even if there is a group of us trying to cross the road," shared a student from the Fine Arts Department.

The Bengaluru Traffic Police said that while it is not possible to ban private vehicular movement on campus as of now, several steps have been taken to make it safer for students.

"We have banned heavy goods vehicles and installed signages everywhere. We have installed speed breakers and rumbler strips. We have a new police station set up there and like everywhere else in the city, we have amped up enforcement there too," said M.N. Anucheth, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), Bengaluru.

UGCET admit cards available for download

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) on Sunday released the admit card download link for the 2025 Common Entrance Test (UGCET) which is scheduled to be held on April 16 and 17.

KEA is also providing a sample OMR sheet to students to practise marking on before the exam. "To assist students, the admit card also comes with asample OMR sheet and guidelines, making it atwo-page document that students must download and review carefully," said H. Prasanna, executive director, KEA.

The admit card can be downloaded by visiting the KEA website, clicking on the respective link, and logging in using theID and name of the candidate. The KEA has also enabled an OTP and facial recognition-based login for the first time. The officials also said that the same admit card will be applicable for the Kannada exam scheduled on April 15.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (April 7, Monday), the following articles are available:

- Can the U.S. President serve a third term? **newsth.live/threetermsuspresidentexp**
- West Africa chimps are losing their culture, in another human legacy **newsth.live/chimpswestafrica**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Nine-year-old girl dies in tractor accident

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A nine-year-old girl died on Saturday after the tractor she was travelling in with her father tumbled down on the Pattanduru Agrahala lake shore near Whitefield

The deceased was identified as Isinaka Bhat. The police said that her father was taking her and her six-year-old sister to his shed on the tractor on Saturday afternoon when the incident occurred.

He allegedly lost control of the vehicle and it tumbled.

While Isinaka came under the tractor, her father and her sister escaped without major injuries.

Father booked

The Whitefield Traffic police visited the accident site and have registered a case of rash and negligent driving against the father. Further investigation has been taken up.

Utility shifting for airport expansion is State's responsibility, says AAI

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Who is to bear the cost of utility shifting to pave the way for the expansion of Mysuru airport? The question has gained traction following Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's recent meeting with Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu and seeking Central funds to the tune of ₹101.84 crore for utility shifting.

Mr. Siddaramaiah had stated that the State government has borne the land acquisition cost of ₹310.14 crore towards the acquisition of 240 acres that is required for the runway expansion of Mysuru airport, and hence, the Civil Aviation Ministry should bear the cost of utility shifting. He had submitted a letter dated January 9 in this connection.

But prior to the meeting, the Chief Minister had sent the same letter, and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) had already responded on January 16 stating that as per the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016, it was the State government's responsibility to foot the bill. Citing the prevailing policy, the AAI stated that the land will be provided free of cost and free from all encumbrances by the State government.

Man's body found in bush

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A badly mutilated body of an unidentified man was found in a bush in North Bengaluru's Peenya area on Sunday.

The body was discovered in Panchamukhi Layout, under the Peenya police station limits. According to officials, the deceased appears to be between 25 and 30 years and was wearing a shirt and trousers.

His identity is yet to be established.

Karnataka Urban Water Supply & Drainage Board
The Chief Engineer, Jalabhavan, #P-4, 10th main, 3rd cross, 3rd floor, Saraswathipuram, Mysuru-09,
Ph No: 0821-2545894, Email:kwbcemys2014@gmail.com.
e-Auction Tender Notification
Name of the work: Auction of obsolete and unusable materials such as released 508 mm & 406 mm dia MS pipes under shifting of MS pure water rising main of Maddur water supply system from Malavalli to Maddur under DC works of KSHIP stored at Bachanahalli WTP Premises & Mandya division store yard premises of KUWS & DB, Bannur road, Mandya is invited through https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in with **A.P.T Rs. 103.05 lakhs** and **E.M.D Rs. 1.55 lakhs.**
For details - https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.
Sd/-Superintending Engineer, K.U.W.S. & D BOARD, Mysuru
DIPR-DD-MYS/34/KSMCA-027/2025-26

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. 01/2025 Dated: 03.04.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items:

Tender No.	Description in Brief
L8246681A	Advanced Phaco-Emulsification Machine with CAMC Condition. (Qty: 1 No.)

Last date for Submission/Tender Due on: **Upto 10:30 Hrs. on 28.04.2025**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Materials Manager / Bengaluru
PUB/11/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2025-26
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
DOCUMENT LOST
THAT, **I, Smt. Sapna Sanjiv,** W/o. Dr. C.C. Sanjiv, Old No. 66, New No. 3/2, Jain Temple Street, V.V. Puram, Bengaluru-04, have lost Original Sale Deed document, dated **16th June 2004, Vide No. 7282 of 2004- 2005,** registered at Sub-Registrar Office, K.R. Puram, Bengaluru, the public shall not act or transact upon this lost document.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only Through KPP-Portal)
BWSSB invites tenders from registered agencies for the following works:
Office of the Engineer in Chief, 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & Time for submission of tender	Date and time for opening of tender
1	UFW-2	BWSSB/EE(UFW)-2/PB/05/2025-26 Date: 04.04.2025	₹ 62,92,048/- / ₹ 1,25,850/-	22.04.2025 upto 4:00 pm	23.04.2025 after 4:05 pm
2		BWSSB/EE(UFW)-2/PB/07/2025-26 Date: 04.04.2025	₹ 60,46,670/- / ₹ 1,20,950/-		
3		BWSSB/EE(UFW)-2/PB/09/2025-26 Date: 04.04.2025	₹ 41,00,000/- / ₹ 80,000/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (UFW-2)
The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.
DIPR/CP/MIA/91/2025-26

THE HINDU GROUP
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1. What is the name of the iconic green cap, symbolizing national pride and tradition, awarded to Australian cricketers on their Test debut?
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3. In December 2017, which Australian cricketer achieved a Test batting rating of 947, the second-highest in history behind Don Bradman's legendary 961?
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PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our client **Mr.Arul Mani Gomez S/o Mr.Mahendran S** and his wife **Mrs.Nirmala Gomez W/o Mr.Arul Mani Gomez** both are intending to purchase the schedule property mentioned hereunder from **1) Sri.A.Krishnappa @ A.Krishnareddy S/o Sri.Late.Ayappa;** any person/s objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/ claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our clients shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing North Eastern Portion of **Site No. 1,** Khatha No. 10/1/1, Converted Survey No. 10/1, Situated at: **KYALASANAHALLI, K. R. Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk,** now comes under jurisdiction of BBMP, Bangalore. Measuring EAST TO WEST: on the Northern Side 44.5 feet on the Southern Side 33.5 feet and NORTH TO SOUTH: on the Eastern Side 45.5 feet on the Western Side 37.5 feet, in all measuring **1618.5 sq.ft.,** and bounded on the:
East by : 5 Feet Passage left in same Sy No.10/1. West by : Property Belongs to Sri Ashok, North by : Road Left in same Sy No.10/1. South by : South Eastern Portion of Site No. 1,
C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
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CHANGE OF NAME
I, Hitherto Known As Samiksha Akarsh Hegde Alias Samiksha Udaya Shankara Shetty Alias Samiksha D/O Udaya Shankara Shetty Residing At 3992/83 11th Cross Anjaneya Layout Davanagere Bapuji Vidyanagara Karnataka-577005, Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Samiksha Shetty For All Future Purposes

PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Hitherto Known As Ranjitha B W/O Pavankumar S J Residing B72, Ground Floor, 1st Main Road, Near Bgs Medical College And Hospital, B E L Layout, Nagarur, Dasanapura, Po: Dasanapaura, Dist: Bengaluru, Karnataka-562123, Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Ranjitha Pavankumar For All Future Purposes

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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
I, B. SHAASHWATA, Daughter of A. BALACHANDER, residing permanently at Flat no. F2, No.105, Saravana Nagar, 2nd street, Madambakkam Main Road, Rajkilpakkam, Chennai, Selaiyur, Kancheepuram, Tamilnadu– 600073 and presently residing at Flat no. 115, Tejas Daffodils Apartment, 1st Main, 11th Cross, Pai Layout, Benniganahalli, K R Puram, Bengaluru– 560016. I have changed my name from SHAASHWATA. B to B.SHAASHWATA vide affidavit dated: 03/04/2025 sworn before Notary: RAJANNA S.M.

I, Hitherto Known As Ashwin M S/O James Michael Residing At No 52/53, 2 Cross Rachena Halli Bds Layout, Behind Bharat Petrol Hegde Nagar, Bangalore, North Bengaluru, Karnataka-560077, Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Ashwin Michael For All Future Purposes

CHANGE OF NAME
I, MANISH SREENIVAS S/o Sreenivas Reddy M, aged about 27 years, R/at No. 4129-10, 2nd Main, B Block, 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Srirampuram, Bangalore-560 021 do hereby declare that all the names i.e. **MANISH SREENIVAS, SREENIVAS MANISH** and **MANISH .S** are one and the same and refers to me only, vide affidavit dated 11-03-2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **G. DAYANANDA** at Bangalore.

PUBLIC NOTICE
PUBLIC NOTICE
The public are hereby informed that our client intends to purchase vacant land of an extent of 2 grounds and 2,175 sq.ft., comprised in R. S. No. 1832/13, in Block No. 38 of Mylapore (Part 1) Town, Mylapore Taluk, Chennai District, situated adjacent to Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Mylapore at No. 209 (123), Royapettah High Road, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004 (the "Said Land"), from Ashok Srinivasan, Vikram Srinivasan Chari and Neeraja Srinivasan, children of late S.Srinivasan.
Any person having any adverse claim or interest over the "Said Land", whether on the basis of any prior agreement, encumbrance, lien, charge, or on any other basis whatsoever, are hereby called upon to make the same known to the undersigned, in writing along with supporting documents, within 15 days from this date, failing which our client will proceed to purchase the "Said Land", free of any adverse claim or interest whatsoever.
NIRMAL CARIAPPA & K. JACOB GEORGE
Advocates
No.22/1, Sterling Road
1st Cross Street, Nungambakkam
Chennai - 600 034

West Africa chimps are losing their culture, in another human legacy

In new research, scientists reported four dialects that male wild chimpanzees use in the Taï National Park to find mates. But after documenting the chimpanzees' lives for more than a generation, the scientists also reported these apes are 'forgetting' parts of the dialect thanks to human influences

Madhurima Pattanayak

Culture is what we learn from others and pass on to successive generations by practising it over and over. Scientists have found cultural traditions among humans as well as animals, the latter in the way they forage, socialise, use tools, care for themselves, and mate.

Among these traditions, the characteristic patterns of behaviour that involve communication are called dialects.

In new research published in the journal *Cell*, scientists with the Taï Chimpanzee Project in West Africa reported four dialects that male wild chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes verus*) use in the Taï National Park to find mates to copulate with.

Unfortunately, after documenting the chimpanzees' lives for more than a generation, the scientists also reported these apes are 'forgetting' parts of the dialect thanks to human influences.

"Cultural behaviours are crucial for survival," Catherine Crockford, a scientist leading the project and researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Germany, and ISC Marc Jeannerod, France, said.

"Illegal hunting or logging may not only be killing individual chimpanzees but also destroying their cultures, which could threaten the survival of the remaining chimpanzees." Chimpanzees are also poached for use as pets or for bushmeat.

A female chimpanzee grooms an adult male in Loango National Park, Gabon. West African chimpanzees are a subspecies found in western Africa, including Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, and Ghana. AFP

'Secretly ask females for sex'

Researchers once believed culture separated humans from other animals. But in the last seven decades, research has revealed cultural practices in many animals. Even so, community-specific dialects in non-human primates such as chimpanzees, orangutans, and bonobos have been rare.

The scientists with the Taï Chimpanzee Project reported four distinct types of dialects that male West Africa chimpanzees used to find mates: heel-kick, knuckle-knock, leaf-clip, and branch-shake.

In a heel-kick, the chimpanzees lifted their feet and kicked against a hard surface to make noise. The knuckle-knock involved repeatedly, but somewhat quietly, knocking their knuckles against hard surfaces.

Likewise, in the leaf-clip, chimpanzees bite a leaf and strip it into pieces without eating it, creating a ripping sound. The branch-shake is self-explanatory.

"It is amusing to watch how young subordinate males try to secretly ask females for sex without the dominant males knowing," Ms. Crockford said. "This is the main function of these more subtle gestures".

The team documented heel-kicks among the North, South, Northeast, and East chimpanzee communities; knuckle-knocking in the Northeast community; and leaf-clip and branch-shake among the North, South, and Northeast communities.

A dangerous demographic shift

The knuckle-knock gesture is restricted to the Northeast community. It was previously among adult males of the North community as well, but since 1999, it has suffered significant population loss.

The problem became so bad that between 2004 and 2011, the North group didn't have two adult males existing at the same time. Put another way, any adult male didn't have to compete with other adult males and thus had no use for the knuckle-knock dialect.

Researchers understand that demography plays a crucial role in shaping culture and keeping it alive across generations. A systematic data collection effort concluded in 2019 that no members of the North group had used knuckle-knocking in 20 years.

Significant changes in a population, in this case the near-complete loss of an entire demographic (adult males), can thus have a long-lasting impact on the preservation or loss of cultural traditions. Restoring them isn't easy. For example, with the help of ecologists and the Côte d'Ivoire government, the North group has had four adult males since 2016 but the knuckle-knock gesture hasn't reemerged among them.

> Cultures emerge over generations. Cultural behaviours — such as the use of specialised toolkits, nut-cracking with stone hammers or digging out underground bee nests with different-sized sticks — are crucial for survival

"While establishing absence is challenging, our observations demonstrate a shift-away from knuckle-knock gesture usage," the researchers wrote in their paper.

Their own language

To further understand the origins of the chimpanzees' culture, the team compared mating solicitation gestures involving the use of tools between Taï chimpanzees and Sonso chimpanzees at the Budongo Forest Reserve in Uganda.

Whereas theTaï chimpanzees preferred the knuckle-knock, the Sonso chimpanzees used the object-slap: moving the arm from the shoulder to slap an object with an open palm.

Likewise, the Sonso chimpanzees frequently used leaf-clipping to express their interest in mating but the Taï chimpanzees didn't.

Chimpanzees have genetically inherited certain gestures across subspecies but individuals have been known to express only a subset. But within a closed group, multiple individuals use the same set of gestures over time and can even differ from the gestures used in a neighbouring group.

The Budongo Forest Reserve is about 4,160 km from the habitat of the Taï chimpanzees of Côte d'Ivoire. "We can rule out that the different signals used in each community have a genetic origin. Given they live in a similar forest environment, we can also rule out environmental influences on culture," Ms. Crockford said.

"This leaves us with the most likely option: that different signals in neighbouring communities arise through social learning."

Bringing conservation to culture

"Cultures emerge over generations. Cultural behaviours – such as the use of specialised toolkits, nut-cracking with stone hammers or digging out underground bee nests with different-sized sticks – are crucial for survival," Ms. Crockford said.

According to her, the preservation of animal culture is a relatively new concept. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recently included it among the metrics it uses to prepare its 'Red List of Endangered Species.' The message seems to be that chimpanzees should be protected as well as their cultures.

But the IUCN's job isn't done. In a November 2024 paper in *Science*, researchers reported that the deaths of a species' elders are disproportionately more harmful than the deaths of other members.

This is because the elders possess important cultural knowledge: where to find the best watering holes in particular weather, the ways to respond to different predators, caring for the young when the parents can't, and so on.

One of the authors of this study wrote then that the "loss of old individuals is not yet recognised by the IUCN as a means of listing threatened species."

(Madhurima Pattanayak is a freelance science writer and journalist based in Kolkata. madhurima.pattanayak@gmail.com)

THE GIST

Cultural behaviours are crucial for survival. Illegal hunting or logging may not only be killing chimpanzees but also destroying their cultures, which could threaten the survival of the remaining chimpanzees

Researchers once believed culture separated humans from other animals. But research has revealed cultural practices in many animals. Even so, community-specific dialects in non-human primates such as chimpanzees, orangutans, and bonobos have been rare

A study concluded in 2019 that no members of a chimpanzee group being studied had used knuckle-knocking — a typical mating behaviour in 20 years. This was due to the near-complete loss of adult males in the community

BIG SHOT

Scientists perform a necropsy on a baby mammoth at the North-Eastern Federal University in Yakutsk, Russia, on March 27. The carcass was dug up in 2024 in icy Yakutia. It weighs 180 kg, is 120 cm tall and 200 cm long. They found it lived and died more than 130,000 years ago after analysing the permafrost where she was found. AFP

WHAT IS IT?

Hadean protocrust: hot and hellish

The Hindu Bureau

The Hadean protocrust is the name for the earth's crust — its outermost layer — when it first formed. The 'Hadean' prefix refers to the planet's first geologic aeon. At this time, within 200 million years of its genesis, the earth's surface was partially molten and almost constantly bombarded by rocks from space. As many volcanoes also raged, the surface was very hot and hellish.

As parts of the magma ocean cooled, the first pieces of the crust began to take shape. It was still somewhat flaky, with some parts sloughing off and new parts solidifying. The thicker parts of the crust slowly formed the first continents, which moved like plates on the asthenospheric mantle, a layer of hot, gooey rock going 400 km down.

The plates soon began drifting into each other, sometimes sliding over, sometimes diving under. Such plate tectonics have left unique chemical signatures in the crust over millennia. In fact, scientists have understood the history of plate tectonics by studying these signatures.

A representative illustration of the earth's Hadean protocrust as it took shape. IMAGE CREATED WITH CHATGPT

A new study by an international team of researchers led by Macquarie University in Australia has now called this assumption into question. The researchers have reported that the signatures scientists have associated with plate tectonics actually existed in the Hadean protocrust, before the plates began to subduct, calling an important tenet of geology into question.

The study, which used a combination of models and lab studies, will have to be validated by independent research.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

On Ramanavami

Devotees during Ramanavami celebration at Rajajinagar Ram Mandir on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Vidwan Sandeep Narayan receiving the S.M. Krishna Memorial National Award for Music-2025 at the Ramanavami celebrations and Global Music Festival 2025 in Bengaluru on Sunday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Whether going out or eating in, expenditure budgets go up

In February, hoteliers in Bengaluru decided to hike the price of coffee by 10-15% and some of them also increased the prices of a few food items by the same amount. Further, alcohol, including beer, has become expensive

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

My family has four adults and a child. We buy two litres of milk every day. With the recent price hike, milk costs me an extra ₹8 per day now. We also buy two-and-a-half kg of coffee powder every month. The cost of coffee powder has gone up from ₹180 to ₹210 for 500 g. Overall, just for coffee and milk our monthly budget is up by around ₹500," shared Prashanth Kumar, a resident of North Bengaluru.

With coffee prices touching an all-time high and the recent hike in the price of Karnataka Milk Federation's (KMF) Nandini milk and curd by ₹4 per litre has increased the household budgets by anywhere between ₹300 and ₹600 in the last few days. This does not withstand the prices of other commodities like a few vegetables and pulses and grains which have also gone up slightly in the last few months. "The greatest impact on our house's budget has been the price of milk. While we do not buy curd every day, milk is essential as we use it in our breakfast regularly. With the recent price hike, we are thinking of reducing its usage and looking for alternatives. Although it has only been a few days since the price hike took effect, we have stopped ordering milk online and going to the store to at least save on delivery charges. Other than this, the price of channa dal and moong dal has also gone up by ₹10 to 15 per kg from last month. The price of beans has also increased to ₹75 - ₹80 per kg this week," shared Nisarga S.K., a resident of Basavanagudi.

If the prices of other milk products and commodities go up, hoteliers will have to consider increasing the prices of food items, according to stakeholders. FILE PHOTO

Price rise

- Coffee powder ₹60 - 100 a kg
- Moong dal ₹10 - 15 a kg
- Channa dal ₹10 - 15 a kg
- Milk and curd ₹4 a litre

For Bengalureans, eating at home is also getting costlier at the same time when eating outside is also getting more expensive.

On Sunday, a social media user shared how a two-person breakfast at a popular restaurant chain cost him ₹500.

His order included two portions of idli-vada, a coffee, and a glass of orange juice.

In February, hoteliers in the city decided to hike the price of coffee by 10-15% and some of them also increased the prices of a few food items by the same amount. Further, alcohol, including beer, has become expensive and diners have noticed a 25-30% increase in their bills.

"The usual restobar order for two people which include one or two appetizers, a main course, a dessert and two beers or cocktails costs no less than ₹2,500 - 3,000 now. Just last year, we were complaining about how there was no way to get a meal and drinks outside without at least shelling out ₹1,500 and now it has almost doubled. Even if we want to buy our own alcohol and eat at home, the budget cannot be less than ₹1,000," lamented Mayuri Rao, a resident of J.P. Nagar.

P.C. Rao, president, Bruhat Bengaluru Hoteliers' Association, said that along with coffee and milk, the electricity tariff has also gone up while water tariff is expected to increase too. "Now there is speculation about garbage cess and parking tax and we also have to consider the impact of the diesel price hike. The price of ghee, paneer and other milk products might also go up due to the increase in milk prices. We have to see in this month's bills how much our inputs costs go up."

He also said that if the prices of other milk products and commodities go up, then the hoteliers will have to consider increasing the prices of food items.

Commuters cry foul as auto fares on ride-hailing apps surpass cab charges

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a city known for its traffic snarls, autorickshaws have long been the go-to mode of transport for their affordability and ability to weave through congested roads. However, a growing number of Bengaluru commuters are now expressing frustration over the rising cost of booking autos through popular ride-hailing platforms, where fares are sometimes higher than cab or even sedan rides.

What was once the most economical way to get around is now turning into a costlier alternative, thanks to a mix of hidden charges, algorithm-driven pricing, and inconsistent tipping policies. Multiple commuters have noted that booking an auto through an app often includes additional costs labelled as "tips" or "pick-up fees", leading to fare amounts that defy logic.

"I booked an auto from Indiranagar to M.G. Road last week. The fare showed up as ₹270. Out of curiosity, I checked the price for a sedan—it was ₹230. It's absurd. We've always turned to autos for quick and cheap rides, but now it feels like a luxury," said Priyanka S., a marketing executive.

Several users have pointed out that some apps automatically add a tip during the booking process, particularly for auto rides. These tips are rarely communicated transparently to the passenger – or even to the drivers themselves.

Another commuter, Suresh Kumar, a retired bank employee from Jayanagar, shared a baffling experience. "I booked an auto to Rajajinagar in the morning. The app showed ₹390. A cab for the same destination cost ₹320. I'm on a fixed pension, and I still chose the auto thinking it would be cheaper. But it turned out otherwise," he said.

Such discrepancies have prompted questions about how these platforms determine pricing for autos versus cars. A senior official with one of the ride-hailing companies said: "When passengers book autos for longer distances, there are fewer auto drivers willing to go that far. This results in a scarcity premium," the official said.

The official also acknowledged that aggregators are charging tips. "We're aware that in many cases, the total fare exceeds the cap owing to add-ons like tips, pick-up charges, or service fees, which we say go to the driver. We do pay it to the driver, after deducting the commission," he added.

According to norms set by the Transport Department, auto fares are capped at ₹30 for the first 2 km and ₹15 for each additional km. The city currently has around 3.4 lakh registered autos, many of which are listed on aggregator platforms. Despite the official cap, ride-hailing apps appear to be regularly flouting these rates.

Interestingly, auto drivers themselves claim they are not fully aware of the tip system or its benefits. Manjunath R., from J.P. Nagar, an auto driver who partners with two major platforms, said: "They show some extra amount as 'tip', but we hardly ever see it. They deduct commissions from every ride, and often we don't know what the passenger paid. Many customers think we're charging extra, but it's the app that's manipulating the fare."

Despite repeated efforts, none of the major ride-hailing companies responded to queries seeking their official comment on the issue.

Police take up *suo motu* case after woman is sexually assaulted

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A video captured by CCTV cameras installed at a building in a narrow alleyway of BTM Layout, showing a man sexually assaulting a woman walking with another woman during the night, has gone viral on social media.

Though the victim hasn't come forward and lodged a complaint, the Suddaguntepalya police have now registered a *suo motu* case against the accused, even as the victim is also yet to be identified.

In the short clip, two women are seen walking in the narrow alleyway during the night. A man is seen approaching them from behind and he soon molests one of the women and as they scream for help, the man is seen running away and the women are seen walking further.

Sarah Fathima, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East Division), said they had taken up a *suo motu* case and are trying to track down the victim. "We appeal to the two women to come forward and help us bring the culprit to book," she said.

JNCASR research finds new autism therapy which may help patients become more self-sufficient

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) researchers have found a potential therapy for patients suffering from autism/intellectual disability (ID) that will enable the patient to lead a life less dependent on others.

According to the Department of Science and Technology, current therapeutics prescribed to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD)/ID are mostly related to alleviating the symptoms rather than correcting the phenotypes observed in neurodevelopmental disorders, especially after brain development.

A team, led by Tapas K. Kundu and James Clement, found that in mice with mutated syngap gene (Syngap1+/- mice) which resembles humans with mutated syngap gene (present in autistic patients) the acetylation of DNA-associated proteins, histones or proteins that provide structural support for chromosomes is repressed in the brain.

"The epigenetic enzyme behind this acetylation seems to be KAT3B or p300. Kundu`s group had previously discovered an activator of this enzyme, TTK21. Upon conjugating this activator with glucose-derived nanosphere (CSP-TTK21) and feeding to the Syngap1 autistic mice, the researchers could induce acetylation in the brain," the department said.

It added that the team has shown in research published recently in the journal *Aging Cell* that the CSP-TTK21 restores neuronal function, learning, and memory, and induces neuronal rearrangements in Syngap1+/- mice, mainly when administered after the brain is considered to be developed (adolescents in human beings).

'Tenders called for decorative lighting on metro pillars'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said the government had called for tenders for decorative lighting on metro pillars and key heritage buildings in the city. He was speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of a permanent facility to illuminate the Vidhana Soudha on Sunday.

He also said that a tender to replace all existing streetlights with LED lights had failed and a new tender would be issued soon.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, APR. 07	
RISE 06:12	SET 18:31
RISE 14:12	SET 02:28
TUESDAY, APR. 08	
RISE 06:11	SET 18:32
RISE 15:03	SET 03:11
WEDNESDAY, APR. 09	
RISE 06:11	SET 18:32
RISE 15:51	SET 03:49

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	25
Mysuru	33	20
Bengaluru	33	21

Bengaluru Today
33°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be war warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty wiinds may occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm Night will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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E-TENDER NOTICE

Selection of Marketing/ Advertising/PR Agencies

Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited from reputed registered Firms/ Companies/Agencies for selection under the following categories to assist Kerala Tourism to carry out various activities.

Cat. No.	Title of the Agency	e-Tender ID
1	Branding & Advertising Agency	2025_TOUR_757773_1
2	International Trade Marketing Agency	2025_TOUR_757954_1
3	National Trade Marketing Agency	2025_TOUR_758308_1
4	Local Events & Advertising Agency	2025_TOUR_758311_1
5	Public Relations Agency	2025_TOUR_758082_1

The entire procedure of bidding will be as e-Tender. Interested Firms/ Companies/Agencies may log on to https://etenders.kerala.gov.in for details.
Last date and time for receipt of EOI - 6.00 PM on 26.04.2025.
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Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The share of faculty posts vacant in AIIMS-Delhi

35 In per cent. Responding to a query under the RTI Act, the administrative officer of the faculty cell of AIIMS-Delhi said 430 faculty seats were vacant at the institute against a sanctioned strength of 1,235. There were no recruitments for regular faculty posts in 2020, 2023, 2024. PTI

The share of bank accounts owned by women in India

39.2 In per cent. According to the latest edition of "Women and Men in India 2024: Selected Indicators and Data" released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, women own 39.2% of bank accounts. The proportion is even higher at 42.2% in rural areas. PTI

Claimed number of new BJP members in Maharashtra

1.51 crore. At least 1.51 crore people took primary membership of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Maharashtra during a recent campaign, the party's State president Chandrashekhar Bawankule said. Mr. Bawankule was addressing party workers at a function. PTI

Days for which BJP is protesting against price rise, reservation

16 The Karnataka BJP will launch a 16-day movement against price rise and 4% reservation for Muslims in government contracts. The first phase of the *Janaakrosha Yatra* will cover Mysuru, Mandya, Hassan, Kodagu, Mangaluru, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada. PTI

Number of people killed due to Israeli strikes on Gaza

15 Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip killed at least 15 people, including 10 women and children, overnight and into Sunday, according to local health officials. The latest strikes hit a tent and a house in the southern city of Khan Younis. AFP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Can the U.S. President serve a third term?

What does 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution state? How is U.S. President Donald Trump trying to circumvent the 22nd Amendment and serve one more term as President? Are there circumstances through which the U.S. Speaker could become U.S. President? What are the rules in other nations?

EXPLAINER

Kartikey Singh

The story so far:

On March 30, the 78-year-old U.S. President Donald Trump said he's "not joking" about serving a third term in the White House. He further claimed that a legal loophole could make it possible.

Does the U.S. Constitution allow it?

The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified on February 27, 1951, limits U.S. Presidents to two elected terms. It was brought in response to Franklin D. Roosevelt's unprecedented 'four-term' Presidency (1933-1945), which broke the 'two-term' unwritten precedent set by the nation's first President, George Washington, who voluntarily declined a third term in 1796.

The Amendment prohibits anyone from being elected President more than twice, and if someone has served as President for more than two years of another's term (for example, a Vice President who became President due to the President's death or resignation), they can only be elected once. Thus, effectively, the maximum U.S. Presidential tenure can be 10 years (two years as a successor plus two full terms). For Mr. Trump, elected in 2016 and 2024, the 22nd Amendment unequivocally bars a third term, due to his two elected tenures (2017-2021 and 2025-2029), regardless of their 'non-consecutive' nature.

What is the 'VP loophole'?

Despite the 22nd Amendment's clarity, Mr. Trump has suggested ways to circumvent it. One idea he proposed involves J.D. Vance running for President in 2028 with Mr. Trump as Vice President (VP). If elected, Mr. Vance would resign, allowing Trump to assume the Presidency. However, the 12th Amendment blocks this strategy, stating: "No person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States." Since the 22nd Amendment bars Mr. Trump from another term, he cannot serve as VP either.

New rules: A protest against the policies of U.S. President Donald Trump in California, on April 5. AFP

While the VP route is blocked, another theoretical path exists through 'succession', as explained by Professor Bruce G. Peabody in his paper. The 22nd Amendment prohibits a person from being "elected" to the Presidency more than twice but does not bar "serving" beyond two terms. In other words, a twice-elected President could ascend to the Oval Office via the line of succession, such as by becoming Speaker of the House, who is elected by members of the House and need not himself be a member of Congress, if the President and VP become unavailable.

A third pathway – repealing the 22nd Amendment – is highly unlikely. Under Article V, this requires either a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate or a 'constitutional convention'– a process never used – called for by two-thirds (34) of State legislatures, followed by ratification by three-fourths (38) of the 50 States. Given the current U.S. political landscape, the likelihood of Mr. Trump securing a constitutional amendment, which has not been done in the past 33 years, is virtually non-existent.

Which world leaders have extended their tenure?

Leaders all over the world have skilfully extended their rule by reshaping constitutional limits. For instance, Vladimir Putin, after two terms as Russia's President (2000-2008), hit the 'consecutive' two-term limit under Article 81(3) of the 1993 Constitution. To circumvent this limit, he then became Prime Minister (2008-2012) as his ally Dmitry Medvedev took the Presidency and extended the Presidential term from four to six years. Returning as President in 2012 and 2018, Mr. Putin, with a 2020 amendment backed by a loyal Duma and judiciary, reset his term count, potentially holding power until 2036.

Türkiye's Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister (2003-2014), turned President, axed term limits via a 2017 referendum, and reshaped Türkiye's system into a Presidential one. Similarly, China's Xi Jinping eliminated the two-term cap in 2018. This change allowed Mr. Xi to rule indefinitely, cementing his hold over the party and the State.

Yet, some leaders thrive without rewriting the rules. In Germany, where chancellors face no 'term limits' but need 'Parliamentary support', Angela Merkel ruled for 16 years. Similarly, Prime Ministers in Canada and Britain, unbound by fixed terms, can lead indefinitely, sustained by 'party confidence'.

Why doesn't India have term limits?

Unlike the U.S. Presidential framework, India's Parliamentary system imposes no term limits on its Prime Minister, as tenure depends on retaining the Lok Sabha's confidence (Article 75(3)). This design ensures 'voter sovereignty', 'democratic flexibility', and 'parliamentary accountability', allowing leaders who sustain public trust to serve extended periods. For instance, current Prime Minister Narendra Modi could serve 15 years by 2029. However, the system also includes checks like the "no-confidence" motion, which has historically ended tenures – such as those of V.P. Singh (1990), H.D. Deve Gowda (1997) and Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1999). Moreover, regular elections, coalition dynamics, floor debates, judicial oversight, and a free press ensure a robust democratic balance.

Kartikey Singh is a final year student at RGNUL, Patiala, Punjab.

THE GIST

- The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified on February 27, 1951, limits U.S. Presidents to two elected terms.
- The 22nd Amendment prohibits a person from being "elected" to the Presidency more than twice but does not bar "serving" beyond two terms.
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Why were students protesting over Kancha Gachibowli?

What is the ownership status of the 400-acre land parcel known as Kancha Gachibowli? Why did the government decide to auction the land? Why were environmentalists worried?

Swathi Vadlamudi

The story so far:

The students of the University of Hyderabad at Gachibowli have been protesting ever since the news of the auction of a 400-acre land parcel known as Kancha Gachibowli within campus premises broke. The battle has now reached the Supreme Court, which has acknowledged the destruction of greenery and the existence of wildlife in the area, before taking it up *suo motu*. Three PILs have already been filed in the Telangana High Court against the auction.

Why were there protests?

Students state that the land is part of the university, a claim which has been vehemently denied by the government.

The land was part of the 2,324 acres granted to the University of Hyderabad at the time of its establishment in 1974, as part of the six-point formula proposed by the then Congress government to assuage regional sentiments stoked by the Telangana movement of 1969. However, the land allocation was not formalised through title transfer. Subsequently, large tracts of land, unused by the university, were taken up by the government for various purposes including establishing the Indian Institute of Information Technology, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, and the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh to name a few. By 2010, more than 800 acres of land was taken away in 22 such instances.

What do documents say?

The 400 acres of land which is now under conflict was part of such diversions in 2004, under the then Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government. An MoU was signed with the University of Hyderabad, for the transfer of 534 acres, in lieu of 396 acres allocated at another location. The land formed part of 850 acres allocated to IMG Academies Bharata for developing sports facilities. A sale deed was subsequently signed, just before Legislative Assembly elections in which the TDP was routed by the Congress. After winning the elections, the then Chief Minister cancelled the land transfer, leading to a long drawn out legal battle. The top court dismissed the Special Leave Petition, allowing the present government under Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to take up the land.

What are environmentalists saying?

Undisturbed for more than 20 years, the land has become home to a rich variety of native flora and fauna. Several migratory birds also visit the area. A recent compendium of biodiversity collated from the campus mentions 233 bird species, which is higher than the avian numbers in the KBR National Park and the Mrugavani National Park. It also cited *Murricia hyderabadensis*, a unique spider, which is endemic to the Kancha Gachibowli forest, and found nowhere else. The document also lists at least three reptiles, and 27 bird species which are mentioned in Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, indicating their vulnerability and need for highest protection, besides 72 species of tree diversity.

Why did the govt. decide to auction?

The Congress government in the joint State of Andhra Pradesh under the leadership of Y. S. Rajashekhar Reddy was the first to begin the monetisation of government lands through open auctions, which was decried and denounced by many concerned citizens and political parties. However, such auctions have become the unstated State policy of all subsequent governments in Telangana, irrespective of the party in power.

The Congress party, which won the 2023 assembly elections inherited a State debt of nearly ₹4 lakh crore, which is set to cross ₹5 lakh crore by the end of FY 2025-26. Mr. Reddy's recent admission that he had no funds for capital expenditure reflects the true state of State coffers. The judgment about the ownership Kancha Gachibowli came just in time as a respite for the government, which decided to garner funds for welfare measures through auctioning the land.

THE GIST

- The students of the University of Hyderabad at Gachibowli have been protesting ever since the news of the auction of a 400-acre land parcel known as Kancha Gachibowli within campus premises broke.
- Students state that the land is part of the university, a claim which has been vehemently denied by the government.
- Undisturbed for more than 20 years, the land has become home to a rich variety of native flora and fauna. Several migratory birds also visit the area.

‘Walk for Bandipur’ against possible lifting of night traffic ban launched

In a memorandum to the Forest Department, the United Conservation Movement said incidents of roadkill on the highway had reduced by 90% after the enforcement of the ban

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The resistance to the renewed efforts to lift the night traffic ban through the famed Bandipur Tiger reserve appears to be building as activists and citizens, including farmers, launched the ‘Walk for Bandipur’ campaign on Sunday amidst growing concerns.

The march intends to drum up support for the continuation of the night traffic ban through Bandipur, consequent to apprehensions that it may be lifted as a result of political reasons and pressure from Kerala.

An initiative of the United Conservation Movement, the walk began from the Primary Health Centre, Kaggala Hundi, about 2.5 km before the Maddur check-post on the road to Sultan Bathery. The organisers said the walk is a statement against compromising ecological balance and conservation imperatives under the pretext of development or public convenience.

The ‘Walk for Bandipur’ is supported by people not only from Mysuru, Bengaluru, and other places, but also by local farmers and the general public drawn from various villages on the forest fringes that bear the brunt of the conflict.

Citizens under United Conservation Movement at the launch of ‘Walk for Bandipur’ in Chamarajanagar district on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Former Director of Bandipur T. Balachander, who addressed the rally, said the night traffic ban has not created any problems for the general public and has played a crucial role in minimising conflict and the death of wild animals by road accidents. However, if the ban was eased or lifted, the conflict was bound to increase.

₹40 crore in compensation
The State government was already paying ₹40 crore every year by way of compensation due to crop loss or human deaths because of conflict around Bandipur alone. This was bound to increase in case the night traffic ban was lifted, said Mr. Balachander. Hence, the government should not lift the night traffic ban under any circumstances, he added.

A memorandum, addressed to the Conservator of Forests and Director of Bandipur Tiger Reserve, was also submitted. The memorandum said the highway 766 passing through the tiger reserve, had become a graveyard for wildlife prior to the implementation of night traffic ban.

It pointed out that between 2004 and 2007, the highway had witnessed a staggering number of wildlife fatalities which included 91 mammals from 14 species, 75 birds from 18 species, and 56 reptiles from 16 species that were killed by speeding vehicles.

“This figure exceeded even poaching statistics during the same period,” it stated. However, after the enforcement of the night ban, roadkill incidents reportedly dropped by over 90%, with only nine recorded between 2022 and 2024, according to the UCM Trust.

Similar rallies and protests planned
The UCM’s Plans include similar rallies and protests in Mysuru, Bengaluru, and other places besides reaching out to lawmakers and elected representatives, urging them not to lift the night traffic ban through Bandipur.

MLA for Gundlupet Ganesh Prasad, who addressed the gathering, said there was no proposal before the government to lift the night traffic ban, and Kerala had only sought a few additional buses to ply through the tiger reserve in addition to the four buses that are permitted at present, during night hours.

The Chief Minister and the Forest Minister will also be apprised of the concerns and views of the concerned citizens, and the government is committed to protecting the forests, he added.

Farmers, under the aegis of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, also took part in the campaign.

BJP to launch 16-day ‘Janakrosha Yatre’ against price rise from today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Building further on its day-and-night dharna, the Opposition BJP is embarking upon a 16-day State tour of its leaders for the campaign titled ‘*Janakrosha Yatre*’ (people’s anguish) against price rise from Monday.

The logo for the campaign - which will also focus on the alleged appeasement of Muslims and diversion of funds meant for Dalits - was released in Bengaluru on Sunday by the party leaders.

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy (left) and Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok at a press meet in Bengaluru on Sunday.

Four phases
The first phase of the yatre will be inaugurated by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi in Mysuru after offering pooja at Chamundeshwari temple on Monday evening in the presence of prominent leaders including State president B.Y. Vijayendra and leaders of the Opposition in both the legislature houses R. Ashok and Chalavadi Narayanaswamy.

The campaign will be taken up in four phases till May 3. During the campaign, the BJP leaders would take out protest marches of 1 km and address conventions at the district centres.

BJP Foundation Day
The BJP, which also observed its Foundation Day on Sunday, set the tempo for the proposed statewide campaign with the wish: ‘Let Ravana rajya vanish in Karnataka making way for Rama rajya.’

Addressing a press conference in Bengaluru, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok alleged that the price rise under the regime of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was unprecedented in the history of Karnataka.

Prices of various services and commodities including metro fares, college entrance fees, sowing seeds, fuel and liquor had been increased. It was unfortunate that hefty charges had been imposed on the citizens of Bengaluru for handling waste, he said. He expressed concern that life had become burdensome for poor and middle class people in Karnataka owing to the sharp hike in prices of services and commodities.

‘Political vendetta’
Mr. Ashok accused the CM of a political vendetta against BJP workers. Recalling that the Congress leaders had earlier argued that a death note was the main witness with respect to suicides, he sought to know why the Congress government was yet to acknowledge the death note of BJP worker from Kodagu Vinay. He said the same set of Congress leaders had demanded the resignation of the then Minister K.S. Eshwarappa based on a purported death note. But now, these leaders had adopted a different stand, he alleged.

He particularly took exception to the police filing cases against those publicly criticising the government via social media posts.

State govt. seeks corporate help in treating children with rare diseases

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the annual cost estimated to be about ₹1 crore for each child requiring treatment for ultra-rare diseases, the Medical Education Department has sought corporate support to meet these expenses. Currently, 22 children with ultra-rare diseases are undergoing treatment at Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) here.

The State government is seeking sponsorship to adopt a child’s treatment for the Lysosomal Storage Disorders category of ultra-rare diseases that can cost between ₹20 lakh and ₹40 lakh annually. For the 22 children undergoing treatment, an estimated ₹12 crore to ₹13 crore is needed per year. The government is seeking that corporates adopt one child a year, contributing ₹50 lakh to ensure life-saving treatment.

Hundreds of children across the country, including those in Karnataka, suffer from rare and ultra-rare genetic disorders, and the cost of treatment for many of these conditions can annually go up to several lakhs, a release from Minister for Medical Education, Skill Development and Livelihood Sharan Prakash Patil stated. “To ensure effective, appropriate and timely treatment for such children, the Karnataka government is planning to collaborate with corporate entities under a structured initiative,” he added.

Central grants
The release said that many children have been diagnosed with Lysosomal Storage Disorders (LSDs) - a group of ultra-rare genetic diseases that includes conditions like Gaucher and Pompe, both of which have been identified in Karnataka. It said that under the National Policy for Rare Diseases, the Centre provides grants to support treatment for such patients. Since 2016, children affected by these conditions have been receiving care at the IGICH in Bengaluru, which is one of the 13 Centres of Excellence for Rare Diseases in India. The annual cost of treatment per child is a minimum of ₹50 lakh and could exceed ₹1 crore, it added.

The State government has so far released ₹76 crore to the institute, and a proposal for additional funds from the Centre has been submitted. To seek funds, the Minister has asked officials to send a letter to corporate houses, urging them to adopt children for treatment under their CSR initiatives.

Meanwhile, Dr. Patil has also asked the IGICH Director K.S. Sanjay to utilise a portion of corpus fund to treat the children.

Yatnal challenges Vijayendra to resign, contest again

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Vijayapura MLA Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal, who has been expelled from the BJP, has challenged party state unit president B.Y. Vijayendra to resign as MLA and contest once more.

“I am throwing an open challenge to Mr. Vijayendra to resign as an MLA from Shikaripur. I will also resign as MLA from Vijayapura. Let us both contest the polls again. While I am confident of winning, Mr. Vijayendra would not be. That is because he has won the Assembly polls from Shikaripur only with the Congress assistance,” Mr. Yatnal told reporters in Hubballi on Sunday.

“KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar has claimed that Mr. Vijayendra won the Assembly elections only because the Congress did not field its aspirant Nagaraja Gowda, from Shikaripur. If Mr. Gowda were to contest on Congress ticket, Mr. Vijayendra would have lost. Mr. Vijayendra should have responded to this and denied Mr. Shivakumar’s allegations. He did not. This implies that he accepts them. That is why I am challenging him,” he said.

Supporters of Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal, MLA, who has been expelled by BJP for six years on the charge of indiscipline, protesting against it, at Freedom Park, in Bengaluru, on Sunday. PTI

Mr. Yatnal criticised some Panchamasali leaders who had held a meeting against him in Hubballi on Saturday. “The leaders who conducted the meeting and made long speeches against me, have no moral right to talk about me. They have betrayed the community and looted the assets of the community mutts,” he said.

“Mr. Vijayendra is letting loose his loyal pigs on me. They are criticising me. But I do not want to respond to them. If Mr. Vijayendra is to comment on me, I will respond to him,” he added.

‘Will not join Congress’
To a query, he said he would join the BJP after the party was freed from the control of the Yediyurappa family. “I am confident that it will happen,” he said. He said he would not join the Congress at any time. “Even my dead body will not go to that party,” he said. “I am also considering forming my own party. I am getting support from those who wish for north Karnataka to be a separate state. But then, I am concerned about the division of Hindu votes. I will not do anything in a hurry,” he said.

He alleged that some BJP leaders were involved in a gold smuggling racket and drug smuggling cases involving some actors.

Second airport
He criticised the State government’s plans for a second international airport in Bengaluru. “It is unnecessary. Why can’t they upgrade one of the airports in northern Karnataka instead? It is because the government is anti-North Karnataka,” he held.

Mr. Yatnal further urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take up the next phase of works on Upper Krishna project, even if it required taking loans.

He said he had come to Hubballi to visit the Moorusavira mutt and invite Gurusiddeshwar Mahashivayogi for the inauguration of the Shivanubhava Bhavan on Siddeshwar temple premises in Vijayapura.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

When Kharge gets very angry
BJP MP Radha Mohan Das Agrawal’s remarks on the alleged involvement of Congress politicians in Karnataka in the encroachment of waqf lands ignited a political storm during the debate on the Waqf Bill in the Parliament. Mr. Agrawal claimed that Congress MLAs N.A. Haris, Kaneez Fathima, former Union Ministers K. Rahman Khan, C.M. Ibrahim, former Union Minister the late Jaffer Sharief, former Minister the late Qamarul Islam and others had allegedly encroached upon waqf properties. In the Lok Sabha, BJP MP Anurag Thakur dropped the name of AICC chief

Mallikarjun Kharge *(in picture)*, alleging that he too was involved in the ‘scam’. Livid over Mr. Thakur’s charges, Mr. Kharge said he would resign if the land grab allegations levelled against him were proved. If not, Mr. Thakur should resign, he added.

Ramesh Jarkiholi’s overconfidence
Ramesh Jarkiholi, BJP MLA, who quit the post of Minister after allegations of his involvement in a sex scandal during the previous BJP government, is of the view that expelled BJP MLA Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal will not launch a new party, even though he continues to attack State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra and former CM B.S. Yediyurappa. Speaking to journalists, Mr. Jarkiholi, a friend and supporter of Mr. Yatnal, expressed confidence that the BJP high command would revoke the MLA’s expulsion. The Belagavi leader said Mr. Yatnal’s friends and supporters would appeal to the BJP high command to readmit the former Union Minister. When asked if he feared expulsion or disciplinary action for his open support of Mr. Yatnal, Mr. Jarkiholi said that he was not bothered.

Nagesh Prabhu
Rishikesh Bahadur Desai

V-C appointment: Priyank slams Governor

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Responding to Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot’s letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over the delay in appointing the Vice-Chancellor for the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) University in Gadag, RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge slammed the former, asking him to follow the directions of the Supreme Court.

“Both Houses of the Legislature have passed the Bill. There has been no respect to it. If Governor is there to decide, why should we legislators be there? If they do not like what we are doing, what can I do,” he told pressperson here on Sunday.

His comments came on the Governor’s letter to the Chief Minister in which he set a deadline to appoint the Vice-Chancellor, failing which he would initiate the process.

The Minister pointed out that the process followed in universities in Uttar Pradesh and at National Law School was similar to what was being planned in RDPR University.

“Let him give us a free hand, we will show reforms. The Legislative Assembly and the Council have passed the Bill after discussion. If there are any clarifications, we will write [to him]. We will try to convince [him]. Let us see. Instead of preaching us, let him follow what the Supreme Court has said on the Governor’s role and functioning.”

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BANGALORE RURAL ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Office of Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Bangalore Rural, Anand Rao Circle, Bangalore - 560009.
No: EE/PRED/BNG(R)/TND No-01/TS/2025-26 Date: 03-04-2025
TENDER NOTIFICATION No.01/2025-26
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)
Tender is invited through KPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D, Bangalore Rural, under Zilla Panchayat Various Head of Accounts. The Work details can be obtained from the KPP Portal (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in). The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before 21-04-2025 upto 5.00 PM. Further details contact this office during office working hours.
Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Rural Dist. Bangalore
DIPR/CP/084/SPAN/2025-26

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Jagadha Kameswaran
D.O.B: 25.05.1943
D.O.D: 04.04.2025
Jagadha, wife of Mr. P. S. Kameswaran passed away at Chennai leaving behind grieving husband, children & grand children.
Ph: 9223416030 & 9282345222.

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
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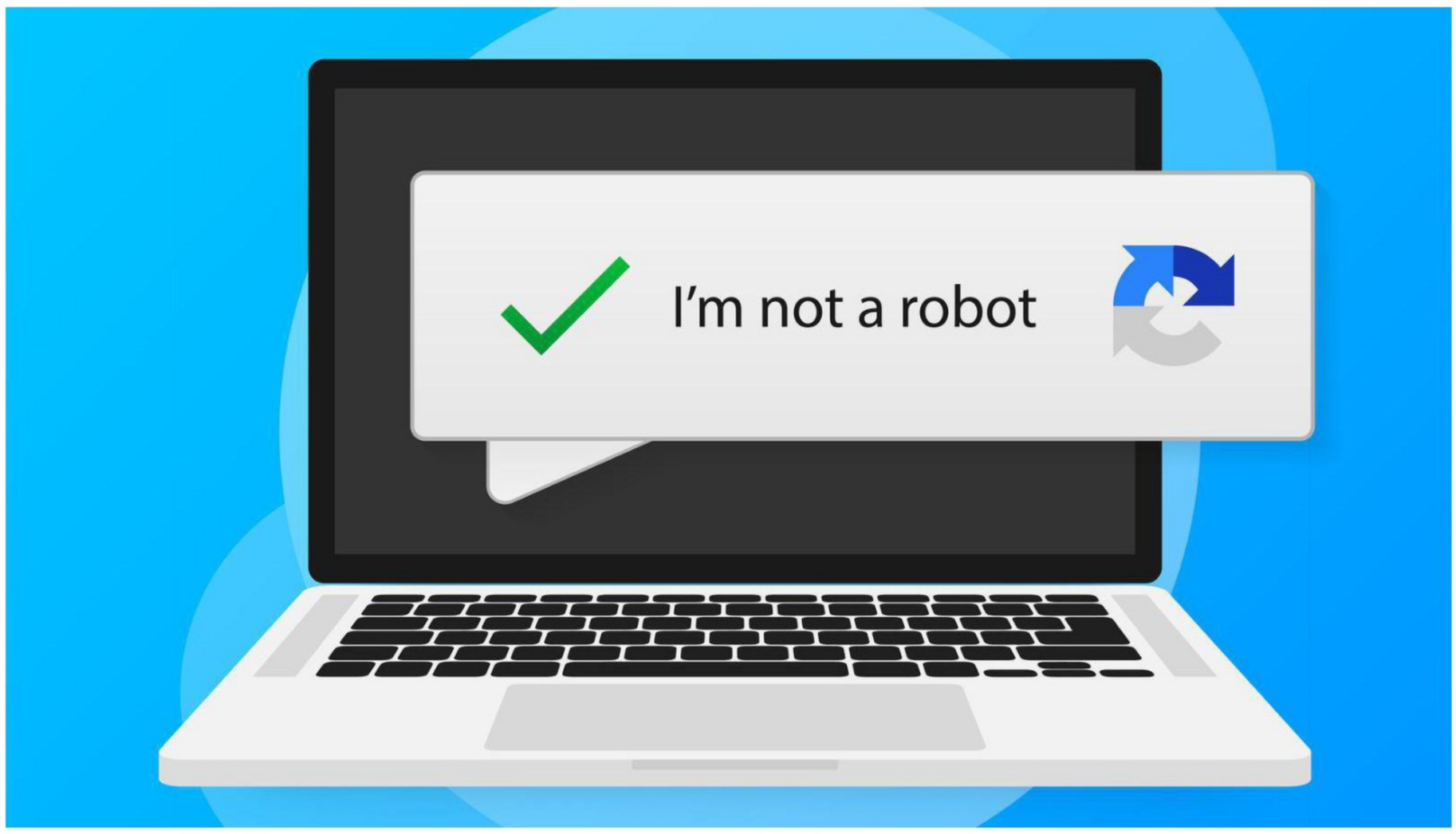

ISTOCKPHOTO

CAPTCHA: a digital border between humans and bots

CAPTCHA has changed the way websites keep user accounts safe and their data protected. From simple text-based challenges to the advanced reCAPTCHA systems we use today, CAPTCHA has made a big difference in online security

John Xavier

In the ever-changing world of Internet technology, keeping users safe and verifying their identities is important. One of the most important security systems for this is CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart). It's like a puzzle that is easy for us to solve but hard for machines.

CAPTCHA was introduced in the early 2000s when the internet was flooded with automated bots. These bots made fake accounts, spammed websites, and stole data. Computer scientists Luis von Ahn, Manuel Blum, Nicholas J. Hopper, and John Langford wanted to create a system that could tell humans from machines, even as bots got smarter and more advanced.

In 2003, von Ahn and his team filed the first patent for CAPTCHA. Back then, users had to solve distorted text or characters that bots struggled to understand. These challenges often involved recognising letters, numbers, or symbols that were deliberately messed up so that machines couldn't parse them but humans could.

CAPTCHA helps keep websites safe from automated attacks and makes online services more user-friendly. The challenge was simple, but its impact was huge. It stopped bots from getting into users' sensitive data.

How does CAPTCHA work?

CAPTCHA is a clever way to tell if you're a real person or a robot. It's like a brainteaser that only humans can solve. Imagine you're trying to figure out what's written in a distorted picture. It's tricky for computers, but it's easy for us. Over time, CAPTCHA has gotten smarter and started to include other challenges to verify humans. Now, you might have to pick an image with a specific object in it, like a car or a traffic light. These challenges are even harder for computers/bots to solve.

CAPTCHA is based on an idea called the Turing test. This was proposed by British mathematician Alan Turing back in the 1950s. The idea was to create a test that could tell if a machine could act like a human. CAPTCHA does just that by making sure that tasks are easy for humans but hard for computers.

How has CAPTCHA changed over time?

At first, CAPTCHA mostly used distorted text to check if a user is a real person. But as computers got better and bots became more advanced, CAPTCHA had to adapt. Now, it has a variety of different challenges to keep us safe.

In 2009, a new way to check if you're a real person called reCAPTCHA came along. It used words from scanned books to verify users. This was a new idea as it not only stopped bots from taking over, but it also helped digitise printed texts. When you solved a reCAPTCHA challenge, you were actually helping to digitise books by typing out words that the computer couldn't recognise. This idea showed how users could come together to help improve digitisation of the world's books.

As CAPTCHA got better, more advanced versions came out. In 2014, Google introduced 'Invisible reCAPTCHA,' which used users' mouse movements to tell if they were human. It was designed to be less annoying while still stopping bot attacks. Today, CAPTCHA is still very important for keeping the internet safe, but it's part of a bigger set of security tools.

How does CAPTCHA help keep the internet safe?

CAPTCHA is everywhere on the internet, used in many different places. Businesses and organisations use CAPTCHA to protect themselves from bots. Business websites use CAPTCHA in contact forms, comment sections, and registration pages to stop bots from spamming. This ensures that only real people can submit forms or leave comments. Many financial and e-commerce websites use this verification technique as an extra layer of security when users sign up for an account, log in, or make a purchase. It helps stop automated bots from stealing credit cards or their personal data.

Another way to think of CAPTCHA is like a secret code that helps keep a user's accounts safe. It's used when they want to recover their accounts, making sure only real people can take control, not bots. It's also used in online surveys and polls, where bots can sometimes try to trick websites. CAPTCHA helps make sure the results are from real people, not bots.

However, even though CAPTCHA is great, it's not perfect.

What are its limitations?

CAPTCHA is everywhere, but it has some downsides. As bots get smarter, they can sometimes trick CAPTCHA. And for people with disabilities, like those who are blind, CAPTCHA can be a real challenge. Even with audio CAPTCHA, it can be hard for people with hearing problems.

While CAPTCHA is great at stopping bots, it does add an extra step to our interactions with websites. This extra step can be annoying, especially on mobile devices, where completing CAPTCHA can be a pain and take a long time. Some CAPTCHA tests can also be really tough, and make people frustrated. If the characters are hard to see or the instructions are unclear, it can be hard for people to finish the task. This can scare away people who just want to use the website.

Moreover, as bots get better, they can sometimes bypass even the best CAPTCHA systems. Machine learning algorithms are getting better at solving complex CAPTCHA, and many websites are using even more complicated verification methods to stay ahead.

What lies ahead?

CAPTCHA has changed the way websites keep user accounts safe and their data protected. From simple text-based challenges to the advanced reCAPTCHA systems we use today, CAPTCHA has made a big difference in online security. But as bots keep getting smarter and people have different expectations, CAPTCHA needs to figure out how to be more accessible and easier to use for humans, and effective to stay important in the world of digital security.

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

Stop playing possum and do your work!

I am not on speaking terms with her ever since that incident where she lied to me

S. Upendran

What is the meaning of 'play possum'? (Ajay Kumar, Bengaluru)

'Possum' consists of two syllables; the vowel in the first, sounds like the 'o' in 'pot', 'not' and 'cot', while the vowel in the second, is like the 'a' in 'china'. The word is pronounced 'PO-sem' with the stress on the first syllable. A possum is a nocturnal animal found mostly in America. It is slow moving, and whenever it senses the presence of a predator nearby, instead of running away, it lies down and pretends to be dead. To ensure that the predator believes that it is dead, the possum emits a foul smell. It does all this in the hope that the predator loses interest in the foul-smelling carcass, and just moves on.

It is not just the possum which plays possum, even we human beings do so every now and then. For example, when someone that you do not like rings the doorbell, what do you do? Usually, you keep quiet, you do not open the door. You hope that the person goes away. Another way of playing possum is by pretending to be asleep. Nowadays, the expression is used to mean 'pretending not to understand'. When you play possum, you use all kinds of tricks in the hope that people will leave you alone.

Stop playing possum. We know that you're a fluent speaker of English.

Is it okay to say, "I'm not on talking terms with Sneha"? (Satyam Singh)

Everyone in India will understand what it is you are trying to say – chances are, a native speaker of English will not have a problem either. But the expression 'talking terms' is Indian; a native speaker would say, 'speaking terms'. When you say that you are not on speaking terms with Sneha, you mean you are not on friendly terms with her. As a result, the two of you do not talk to each other. The opposite is 'be on speaking terms'.

I have not been on speaking terms with him for over 20 years now.

How is the word 'adolescent' pronounced? (Ankit, Mumbai)

The word has four syllables; the 'o' and the final 'e' are pronounced like the 'a' in 'china'. The 'a' in the first syllable sounds like the 'a' in 'cat', 'bat' and 'hat', while the 'e' in the third is like the 'e' in 'set', 'bet' and 'get'. The word is pronounced 'a-de-LES-ent' with the stress on the third syllable. It comes from the Latin 'adolescentem' meaning young man or woman. Nowadays, the word is mostly used to refer to the stage between childhood and adulthood – one's teenage years are frequently referred to as the adolescent years/period.

When you use the word to refer to an adult, what you are suggesting is that the individual's behaviour is rather immature – the person is behaving rather childishly.

upendrankye@gmail.com

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on the famous poet William Wordsworth on his 255th birth anniversary

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Apart from Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who is part of the 'Lake Poets' trinity?

QUESTION 2
Name Wordsworth's semi-autobiographical magnum opus, published posthumously, that contains 14 books and traces the 'growth of a poet's mind.'

QUESTION 3
In which famous poem does the line 'The Child is father of the Man' feature?

QUESTION 4
Which denomination of the British banknote featured the famous poet's likeness?

QUESTION 5
In which language is the *The Solitary Reaper*, a poem published in 1807, singing a plaintive song?

QUESTION 6
Which celebrated poem came about after a walking tour with his sister Dorothy in the Wye Valley on July 13, 1798?

QUESTION 7
The name of which celebrated poet, whom Wordsworth admired, begins the sonnet 'London, 1802'?

Visual question:
Name this national flower of Wales about which Wordsworth wrote one of his most celebrated poems. WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

Questions and Answers to the April 4 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The construction of the _____ ____ in 1961 tested the strength of the alliance between European countries and the U.S. **Ans: Berlin Wall**
2. One of NATO's more controversial actions was its bombing of the Federal Republic of X in 1999, with heavy civilian casualties. **Ans: Yugoslavia**
3. A specific event in the early 2000s, known popularly as X, caused NATO to invoke Article 5 of its charter for the first and so far the last time in its history. Article 5 defines Y. **Ans: X = 9/11 attacks; Y = casus foederis**
4. In 2012, the prime minister of which country considered invoking NATO's Article 5 owing to spillover of conflict from the Syrian civil war. **Ans: Türkiye**
5. Name the country that, while being a founding member of NATO, disallows permanent peacetime bases and nuclear warheads on its territory. **Ans: Denmark**
Visual: Identify this Roman historian. **Ans: Sallust**
Early Birds: Nobody got all the answers correct.

Word of the day

Flaxen:
of hair color; pale yellowish to yellowish brown

Synonym: sandy

Usage: *With her flaxen hair and green eyes, she looks exactly like her mother.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/flaxenpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈflæk.sən/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Bengaluru's summer camps offer children a creative escape during vacation

Like every year, this year too, the city has a variety of summer camps starting from April going on till May on various topics like art, theatre, music, dance, sustainability, sports and more

Yemen S.
BENGALURU

Summer is here, bringing with it memories of childhoods spent under the scorching sun, playing on the streets, splashing in neighbourhood ponds or pools, and gathering around board games on lazy afternoons. For many in Bengaluru, summer once meant a trip to their grandparents' village or native towns, the joy of climbing mango trees, licking ice lollies, and returning home covered in dust and stories. At least until the early 2010s, the city's children had the luxury of open spaces and carefree play.

But Bengaluru has changed. The open grounds have been replaced by concrete towers, and the once-friendly neighbourhood streets are now congested with traffic. Grandparents, who once lived in ancestral homes in villages, now reside in the same city, making the "native place" summer trips a thing of the past. With fewer outdoor spaces and the demands of urban life, structured summer camps have become the new summer tradition, offering children an escape into creativity, learning, and play in a city that no longer lets them run free.

Anita R., an IT professional and mother of a 10-year-old said, "When we were children, summers meant playing outside all day, but now, there is hardly any safe space for children to run around. I prefer enrolling my son in an outdoor adventure camp where he can experience activities like trekking and cycling. It keeps him physically active and away from screens."

Another parent, Neha Suresh, an entrepreneur and mother of a 12-year-old said, "With both my husband and I working, we want a camp that offers full-day activities. Something like theatre or music camps where my son can learn something new while also socialising with other kids. It is a great way for him to build confidence and make new friends."

Similarly, Vikram N., a doctor and father of a nine-year-old boy said, "My son is very shy and does not easily make friends. I wanted him to be in an environment where he could socialise, gain confidence, and interact with kids his age through group activities. That's why we picked a drama and storytelling camp."

Like every year, this year too Bengaluru has a variety of summer camps starting from April going on till May on various topics like art, theatre, music, dance, sustainability, sports and much more.

Art commune at Medai. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Kids at 'What If' by Our Theatre Collective. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Some of the camps to check out this year

Yoga Amidst Nature

Yogi Re, a Bengaluru-based yoga organisation, is set to host Srishti, a five-day residential camp for children. Since 2017, the group has been organising immersive yoga retreats, and this year's edition will take place in two scenic locations, Chikkamagaluru and Bandipur. Designed to blend wellness with the outdoors, the camp offers yoga sessions, meditation, guided treks, nature walks, engaging games, and nutritious meals, fostering a holistic experience for young participants.

- **Date:** *Batch 1, April 8-12; Batch 2, April 30-May 4*
- **Age limit:** *8-12 years*
- **Fee:** *₹3,000*
- **Registration:** *https://yogire.com/*

Yours Truly Theatre at Indiranagar

The children's edition, catering to ages 7 to 11, will include interactive exercises that adapt to the participants' responses. The sessions will begin with activities to help children feel comfortable with one another before transitioning into collaborative exercises. The workshop follows a flexible format, ensuring that each child is engaged and encouraged to explore their creativity. As a culmination of their learning, the children will stage an informal performance on the final day, showcasing their newly acquired skills. Meanwhile, for teenagers, the workshop will place greater emphasis on creativity and self-expression. It will serve as a platform for participants to engage in meaningful discussions on topics such as mental health and body shaming. Through theatre exercises, they will be encouraged to articulate their thoughts and experiences in a supportive environment.

- *Date: April 20-31*
- *Age limit: 7-17 years*
- *Fees: ₹6,000*
- *Registration: BookMyShow*

Nature Trails Kanakpura

This four-day residential workshop offers a unique blend of outdoor learning methodologies focused on experiential and hands-on activities to facilitate the growth and development of children. One of the founders of the camp said that the core idea behind our summer camp is to empower participants with self-reliance, independence, courage, life skills acquisition while igniting a spirit of adventure within them. The camp offers activities like naturopathy, learn how to make bio-enzymes and probiotics, basics of forest survival, farming and cocoon attraction, tent pitching challenge, cave expedition and more.

- *Date: April 21-24*
- *Age limit: 8-15 years*
- Fee: ₹11,500
- *Registration: 6361401179/9113507543*

'What if' by Our Theatre Collective

Abhitej Gupta, one of the facilitators of the workshops, said, "The workshops are all about diving into children's imagination and creating unique stories through play, sound, rhythm, and performance. Through the workshops, we will explore the question 'What if?' by playing with sound and rhythm to make stories come to life exploring fun characters, working with props, and learn how to perform with them and working with a group to create something together." The workshops will also be facilitated by Laya Kumar and Laxmi Priya. On the final day, the children will have the chance to share their creations in a special performance for family and friends. The workshops will take place in Our Theatre Studio at Koramangala and at Courtyard Koota, Kengeri.

- *Date: Batch 1 and 2, April 21-27*
- *Age limit: 7-15 years*
- *Fees: ₹3,600*
- *Registration:* 9886508191

'What if' by Our Theatre Collective. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Art Commune at Medai

This six-day camp is designed to nurture a child's overall development through a blend of engaging and hands-on activities. From gardening to mind sports, art and craft, and theatre, each activity is carefully crafted to inspire creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression, said one of the facilitators. Facilitated by experienced trainers Chaithanya Srinivas and Omkar Kibe, this camp combines artistic expression, cognitive skills, and a connection with nature, the program not only help enhance a child's awareness of their surroundings but also supports their academic and personal development.

- *Date: April 7-12*
- *Age limit: 7-14 years*
- *Fees: ₹6,000*
- *Registration:* 9886612423/8779126641

Summer Express at Ranga Shankara

Like every year, Ranga Shankara in J.P. Nagara is holding Summer Express workshops this year too. Adithya S., a programme assistant at Ranga Shankara, said, "We have identified what we really want to offer our children. It began as shorter workshops 17 years ago and has grown over the years to the current 13-day intensive format we follow. We now do mostly theatre workshops, that range a variety of different topics. Apart from this, we also have shorter cooking workshops conducted by Angela Sudarshan in Anju's cafe on the premises." The workshops will be conducted by theatre makers like Shibani Rao, Vikram Sridhar, Srinivas Beesetty, Kirtana Kumar, Manjari Kaul, Kavya Srinivasan and Surabhi Visisht. Children present a small performance on the last day of their workshop for their families.

- *Date: Batch 1, April 1-27; Batch 2, April 28-May 11*
- *Age limit: 8-12 years*
- *Fees: ₹10,000*
- *Registration: at venue*

LVDS' dance summer camp

Lourd Vijay Dance Studio also known as LVDS is hosting *Break a Leg*, an intensive dance summer camp for children across 10 locations in the city. It will be held between April 7 and 25. The programme will focus mainly on hip-hop, breaking, and popping. In addition to dance, children will also get to learn gymnastics, theatre and art. The camp will end with a performance by the students.

- *Date: April 7-25*
- *Age limit: 4-14 years*
- *Fees: ₹2,499 onward*
- *Registration: 9845239123*

Cardiac telesurgery performed in city using surgical robot

This achievement has opened new corridors, setting a new benchmark in making extended surgical care accessible across long distances

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

SS Innovations, the maker of home-grown surgical robotic system SSI Mantra, has successfully performed what it claimed to be India's first north-to-south robotic cardiac telesurgery. The surgery was made possible by the advanced SSI Mantra 3 Surgical Robotic System. This procedure bridged a 2,000-kilometer distance between SS Innovations' headquarters in Gurugram and Aster CMI Hospital in Bengaluru, according to a release.

This procedure bridged a 2,000km distance between SS Innovations' headquarters in Gurugram and Aster CMI Hospital in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Accesible healthcare

This achievement has opened new corridors, setting a new benchmark in making extended surgical care accessible across long distances, the release said. "The success of this critical cardiac telesurgery brings in a big revolution in Indian healthcare, paving the way for a future where advanced surgical technology plays a vital role in making healthcare more accessible and efficient worldwide," it added. The long-distance tele-robotic assisted intracardiac surgery was performed on a 35-year-old patient, lasted for 2 hours and 40 minutes and involved closing a complex Atrial Septal Defect (ASD), which is a congenital condition where there is a small hole between the two upper chambers of the heart.

The procedure was led by Dr. Sudhir Srivastava, Founder, Chairman, and CEO of SS Innovations from Gurugram, supported by Dr. Arul Furtado, Consultant - Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery at Aster CMI Hospital, Bengaluru, along with his expert team. The surgery demonstrated exceptional precision, achieving an incredibly low latency, further underscoring the accuracy and efficiency of robotic-assisted remote surgery.

The first robotic telesurgery on the Mantra System from Gurugram to Bengaluru was demonstrated by the successful completion of two highly complex procedures - Transthoracic Oesophagectomy and Pelvic Exenteration for T4 Ca Rectum- remotely performed from SMRSC 2025, Delhi/NCR, while the patient was in Aster CMI Hospital, Bengaluru.

Dr. Arul Furtado, Consultant Cardiac Surgeon, Aster CMI Hospital, Bengaluru, said, "The team was highly encouraged by the success of this telesurgery, reinforcing the vital role robotic-assisted surgery will play in the future of cardiac care. This unique insight gives it a distinct advantage, making it highly adaptable and tailored to the needs of cardiac surgeons. As we move forward, I believe robotic telesurgery will redefine access to specialized surgical care, and today's procedure marks just the beginning of this transformation."

The long-distance tele-robotic assisted intracardiac surgery involved closing a complex Atrial Septal Defect

The successful tele-surgeries highlight the potential of advanced robotic technologies to enhance precision and quality in surgical interventions.

Telesurgery not only overcomes geographical constraints but also reduces the need for patients to travel long distances for specialised medical care.

Democratise robotic surgery

SS Innovations Founder, Chairman, and CEO, Dr. Sudhir Srivastava, said, "With CDSCO approval, we are not just pushing technological boundaries but fulfilling our mission to democratise robotic surgery. Telesurgery is revolutionising healthcare, eliminating the need for patients to travel and making advanced surgical care truly accessible and affordable."

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 7, 1975

Mangalore-Hassan Rail Link: 75 p.c Work Over

Bangalore, April 6: Seventy five per cent of the work on the Mangalore Hassan meter-gauge railway link spanning a distance of 189 kms, has been completed and the entire project is likely to be ready by 1978. This link is the longest line which is being laid at present by the railways in the country. The Deputy Chief Engineer Mr. P. M. Joseph, who is in charge of project, and who showed a group congressmen the progress at various project sites on the Hassan-Puttur section on Saturday, said nearly Rs. 30 crores had already been spent on the project which was estimated to cost Rs. 42 crores. The project launched in 1965-66, was originally scheduled to be completed by 1974, and the delay had cost the railways heavily as the original estimate was only Rs. 26 crores.

Bangalore-Mysore Trunk Service

Bangalore, April 6: Mr. A. V. S. Mam, District Manager. Bangalore Telephones, said here on April 4 that it was proposed to commission the demand trunk service between Bangalore and Mysore and between Bangalore and Belgaum sometime during this month.

Speaking to pressmen at the Snaattkarapuram Exchange, where an additional 1,000 lines were added recently, he explained that a decision had been taken to upgrade this (cross-bar) exchange gradually. It would take about a year. The equipment required for the upgradation were being manufactured and supplied by the Indian Telephone Industries.

CITYBEATS

5, 6, 7, 8...

APRIL 7
LVDS (Lourd Vijay's Dance Studio) has announced its Summer with LVDS camp. Open for children aged between four and 14, the classes will begin on April 7 and continue till April 25. The camp will focus on hip-hop, theatre, art, gymnastics and breaking, with sessions led by trained facilitators. The camp is on at 10 locations across Bengaluru. Participants can also look forward to representing India at the Dance World Cup in Europe next year.
For registrations and details call 98452 39123 or visit info@lvds.in

Catch the flavours

ONGOING
Cafe Delhi Heights has introduced interactive games, rewards and a menu that celebrates the IPL season. IPL S#TTA is where you can predict and win, CDH PowerPlay Club (a loyalty programme where every visitor attending IPL screenings gets a loyalty ball) and Full Toss Flavours (a special IPL menu), which features nachos with salsa, a basket of potato wedges, hot garlic chicken wings and more. Besides this, you will also get to take home IPL themed keychains, mini cricket bats and balls as freebies.
At all Cafe Delhi Heights outlets till May 25.

Summer chillers

ONGOING
Naturals Ice Cream has revived its iconic PSG (pineapple, strawberry and guava) flavoured ice cream for a limited season. The product is crafted from pineapples sourced from South India, strawberries from Mahabaleshwar and guavas from Prayagraj. They are then blended with milk and sugar in Naturals' signature style. The flavour hit the stands on April 4 and will be available for a period of 45 days.
Available across all Naturals outlets and online platforms.

On the move Guardian of Grace and Mystic Horse by Fannan Raza. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Channelling creativity

Carpeted Journey Within by Fannan Raza is a novel meeting of art, augmented reality and audio experiences

Ruth Dhanaraj

There is nothing quite as intriguingly beautiful as a Persian carpet, feels Fannan Raza. The artist and interior designer has crafted over 25 pieces of these lovely "art in carpets", currently on display at Sublime Galleria.

Apart from being strikingly eye-catching, these works of art come alive when one scans the QR code below the image. Waves wash on the shore, a leopard regally steps out of a carpeted veil, cats gaze at you with their innate hauteur and a bedecked hand-drawn rickshaw takes you down memory lane.

Bengaluru-based Fannan, who has also done the voiceover and scripting for each piece, says he was inspired by his father Syed Afham Raza. "He was an innovative engineer, constantly creating something or the other and as the youngest child at home, I got to accompany him on a lot of his projects."

"I always looked up to him and when I grew up, I decided to get into designing. After qualifying in interior design, I also took up 3D and psychology in design as I was passionate about it," he adds.

Unfortunately, Syed passed away four years ago and Fannan says he found a measure of solace in art. "Whenever I felt like reconnecting with my dad or find a way to express my emotions, it was always through art," Fannan says, adding that he was always inspired by the artistry of Persian carpets.

"I did a lot of research before I got to designing my artwork. This exhibition is about my journey of loss and grief, how I coped after I lost my father. There are pieces, which talk about my suffocation, my vision and the paths that Life takes us on."

And while he wanted to create something tangible and not just digital, Fannan says, "I couldn't bring myself to talk about my feelings; that is how the augmented reality facet of this show came about."

Fannan works on a digital format to create these carpets, each of which are 27" by 35" and in a vertical format so they "remain within a viewer's gaze". While some have a distinct Arabian Nights mysticism, others showcase different genres such as still lifes, anime, abstract art, surrealism and more.

When asked why his work is not confined to a definitive genre, Fannan says it has to do with how he processes his emotions. "I sit down in a quiet place and collect my memories or remember my journey. I write down a few key points and then sketch what comes to mind."

However, he does not stop there. Fannan conceptualises three to four (or sometimes more) rough sketches before, "I take all of these stories and create a whole new piece. It's all about how I am able to articulate my emotions through what I am creating."

A penchant for stories and an eye for detail is evident in each piece at Carpeted Journeys Within.

"I used to design tattoos when I was in school and even won competitions," says the former Josephite, adding that it was not just one element or motif that he would etch, but an entire narrative around the image.

"I also believe in the power of manifestation. As a school boy, I've seen UB City come up and believed I would get there one day. Today, my first solo show is in its gallery and its windows look out into my old school grounds," says the artist, whose work was also on display at the India Art Fair 2024.

"A lot of people are silently grieving, especially after the pandemic and the whole point of my exhibition and my art is to tell people that this sorrow can be channelled, but first, we need to accept it."

Download the Artivive app to watch Fannan's art come to life on the page. Carpeted Journey Within is at Sublime Galleria, UB City, till April 27, 2025. Entry fee ₹50.

Notes from nostalgia

Deepa Ganesh

Begum Parveen Sultana is 75. Her cheeks may be less rounded but her smile remains intact. She is as graceful and strikingly dressed, including a string of jasmine adorning her hair, as before. Most importantly, her enchanting voice seems untouched by time.

Performing for Bhoomija Foundation's *Holi Re!* in Bengaluru recently, the Begum said: "*Is umr mein gaana... jaan nikal jaati hain!*" (To sing at this age is exhausting).

However, when she began singing to a full house at the Prestige Centre for Performing Arts (PCPA), one hardly felt any strain in her voice – it effortlessly traversed octaves.

Parveen Sultana visits Bengaluru at least twice a year, one of which is to perform at the reputed Sree Ramanavami Global Music festival in Chamarajpet.

Listening to her sing, I was overcome with nostalgia. It brought alive memories of those HMV recordings that introduced me to her stunning rendition of raags Salagavathi, Thodi, Lalith, Nandkauns and Mangal Bhairav.

Discussions after her concerts usually centre around her ability to sing at a high pitch. But there is much more to her voice, as seen in this concert – open-throated aakar, speedy taans and seamless modulation.

Parveen Sultana began with Puriya Dhanashri (bandish 'Laagi mori lagan'). In her characteristic style, she took the audience along right from the opening notes that had a solemn grandeur about them. She explored the lower octaves with conviction, lending the song a pensive quality even as her voice kept perfect pace with the sur. In the drut bandish, 'Payaliya jhankar more', the taans were brisk and marked by clarity.

Parveen Sultana followed this with traditional thumris, specially picked to invoke the colours and moods of spring. 'Kaise kari barjori shyam' set to raag Mishra Kafi. It began with a slow exposition, capturing the reflective nature of the beautiful lyrics, but reached the climax too fast.

Then came a Surdas bhajan – a complex composition, with unexpected turns, again in raag Mishra Kafi.

Can there ever be a concert without the diva singing the evergreen, 'Humein tumse pyar kitna' composed by the inimitable RD Burman? She must have sung the song a thousand times, yet it sounded refreshing. That evening, she recalled the rehearsals and recording of the song in 1981 and was full of praise for the composer.

The musical values she brought into her singing made Parveen Sultana's rendition of 'Bhavani dayani' (raag Bhairavi) a gem.

The well-known Ravindra Katoti on the harmonium and Ojas Adhiya on the tabla provided unobtrusive accompaniment.

Melody and memories Begum Parveen Sultana's concert was a fine blend of technique and emotion. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

How women singers made gramophone a household object

Charumathi Supraja

When Thomas Alva Edison wrapped tin foil around a metal cylinder to create the phonograph (a crude recording device), in 1877, he sang 'Mary had a little lamb' to test it. He couldn't possibly have imagined that in just 25 years, his 'favourite invention' would travel to India in its evolved version as the gramophone and record raag Jogiya rendered by Gauhar Jaan, an Indian courtesan of Armenian descent.

The career choices that Gauhar Jaan and her colleagues – all highly skilled musicians in their own right – made in that period would forever alter who could hear music, where and when. Stories about how these artistes pioneered the Indian music industry were shared by musician and researcher Vidya Shah in 'Women on Record', which was part of Bangalore International Centre's commemoration of Women's Day. Titled 'Unheard Narratives,' BIC's series included talks, film screenings and concerts.

'Women on Record' highlighted how the first voices to inhabit gramophone technology in India belonged to women – courageous, talented and farsighted enough to know that this enterprise would be worth the risks. Unfiltered, bold voices, superb artistry and musicianship and also flamboyant personalities shone through the songs and stories about these trailblazers, known variously as tawaifs, baijis, gaanewaalis, courtesans and devadasis. They played a crucial role in democratising music, because male maestros of the time steered clear of the gramophone – fearing loss of voice and the sullying of classical music, if it were to be made widely available.

Bold voices Musician Janaki Bai Ilahabadi (above), Vidya Shah. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The gramophone, thanks to these women who went on record, became a household object in the homes of the rich, later spawning street corner soirees, riddles, advertisements and jokes in its name.

Though women who chose to record were commercially successful, their social standing was diminished over time by Victorian morality and British politics. The erasure of information about their role and contribution to Indian history and culture is remedied by 'Women on Record' (that also exists as a film that Vidya co-created with Parthiv Shah, and in a book called *Jalsa* (Tulika Books). Vidya says she found it "particularly endearing and inspiring" that these women had "thought through their lives and creative processes in very practical, clever ways".

The first voices to inhabit gramophone technology in India were those of women musicians

"Two artistes, other than Gauhar Jaan, who touched me deeply in terms of their music and entrepreneurship were Janaki Bai Ilahabadi and Sundera Bai Punekar," says Vidya. "As a musician today, I am aware of the need to be savvy and entrepreneurial. These women did that at a time when resources were really limited. Janaki Bai Ilahabadi managed to not be caught up in tight contracts by negotiating with labels. She taught us by example that the artiste should matter. Sundera Bai Punekar went on to make enough money to buy properties in places such as VT in Mumbai, and, at one point, even owned a film theatre."

The stories behind the music fascinated her more than the music, shares Vidya. Fifteen years ago, when an audience member shared a cassette of songs by artistes from this era, it was their names and location that got her curious. "I became interested in the gender-technology connect. If you look at technology as a thing, it tends to be more male oriented, but here I observed the opposite," she says. Grants and fellowships facilitated research that would lead to the film, book, exhibitions and concerts.

Vidya's intent was to understand "how knowledge gets transferred through the record by women who are not necessarily acknowledged through that mainstream tradition. There is this whole cleansing that has taken place", she points out. 'Women on Record' attempts to address that. The challenge was not about "actually getting the records but to get to the stories behind the names and to find people to share stories, more anecdotal than academic. Some of the songs were collected from friends' grandmothers. That has been the nice part of the project," she adds.

EDUCATIONPLUS

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Beyond the college

By acknowledging alternative pathways and encouraging a skill-based approach, we can better prepare our youth for the challenges of the evolving job market

Praneet Mungali

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

For years, the prevailing message by educators has been that higher education is the only path to a secure future. College is celebrated as the gateway to prosperity. However, the Indian labour market tells a different story: higher educational attainment is increasingly linked to higher rates of unemployment and underemployment.

Unemployment rates

A report by the International Labour Organization (ILO), drawing on data from the Employment and Unemployment Survey and the Periodic Labour Force Survey, revealed that unemployment among educated youth far exceeds that among their uneducated peers. In 2024, the unemployment rate for graduates was a staggering 29.1% while that for uneducated youth was 3.4% and for those with secondary education it was 18.4%. Factors such as low-quality education, a lack of employment focus, and insufficient emphasis on skill development contribute to this alarming trend. Similarly, the India Skills Report 2024, which assessed lakhs of final-year students and postgraduates, found that only 51.25% of graduates meet industry employability standards.

For students capable of gaining admission to top institutions with proven career success, that path remains valuable. However, for those facing admission to lower-ranking or non-employment-focused institutions, alternative pathways may offer a better match for their strengths and the demands of the modern job market. Vocational training, apprenticeships, and specialised certification programmes can provide practical skills and direct access to growing industries.

Alternate path

Consider the story of Meera, a bright coder from Pune who, after failing to enter a top university, enrolled in a local college. After struggling for a year, she dropped out to pursue skill-focused training in coding. Her decision paid off, as she got a good job that valued her skills over a formal degree. This is because companies are increasingly prioritising skills rather than academic credentials. Meera's experience is far from isolated. Many young Indians feel pressured to follow the traditional college route, even when alternative paths might better suit their abilities and career goals. The "college-for-all" mindset has left many graduates underprepared, contributing to both unemployment and underemployment, which is another growing concern. Many graduates find themselves in positions that do not fully utilise their abilities, whether through part-time roles, temporary contracts, or jobs that offer little challenge. This often results in low wages, limited career growth, and overall job dissatisfaction.

To avoid these pitfalls, students must explore pathways that align with their individual strengths. Although the college route has historically led to success, the proportion of graduates achieving their full potential is declining. Embracing skill-focused training – supported by internships and hands-on projects – can open doors in industries that no longer prioritise degrees. Many companies, especially in fields like digital marketing, design, and computer coding, are shifting their focus from formal education to demonstrable skills.

Bridge the gap

Employers also have a role to play by supporting skill development through internships and on-the-job training programmes that help bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements. This not only benefits students but also addresses the broader challenges of talent mismatches in the economy. Educators, too, must reconsider their approach and should provide career guidance tailored to a student's capabilities and interests. Recognising that not every student needs to follow a traditional college path is crucial. When students are allowed to develop skills aligned with both their personal interests and market demands, they are more likely to achieve satisfaction and success in their careers.

In summary, while higher education remains a viable path for some, it is no longer the sole route to a secure and prosperous future. By acknowledging alternative pathways – such as vocational training, apprenticeships, and specialised certifications – and by encouraging a skill-based approach to employment, India can better prepare its youth for the challenges of today's evolving job market.

Views expressed are personal

The writer is Trustee and Secretary of the Sanskriti Group of Schools, Pune.

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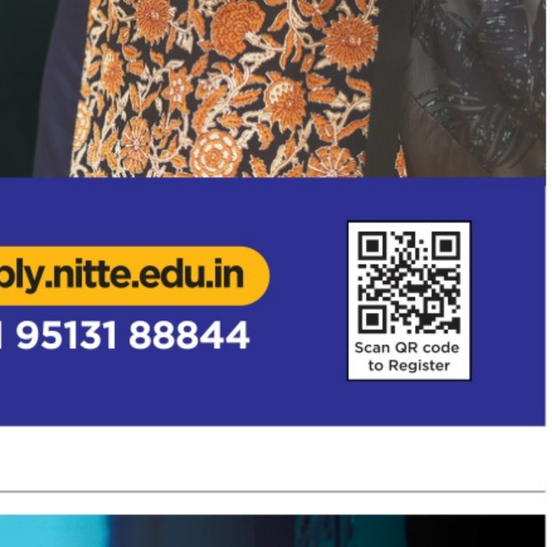
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SP V.N. Manikanta Chandolu with the 3.5kg gold bars recovered from the four accused, who were arrested in connection with a highway robbery case, in Chittoor on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Chittoor police crack ₹3-cr. gold robbery case

The Hindu Bureau
CHITTOOR

The Chittoor police arrested four persons and seized from them 3.5 kg gold bars, worth ₹3.2 crore, in connection with a highway robbery that occurred on the Nayakaneri forest road on the evening of April 2.

Addressing a press conference here on Sunday, Superintendent of Police (SP) V.N. Manikantha Chandolu said, "Chetan Kumar, a staff at a jewellery mart in Kolar Gold Fields (KGF) in Karnataka, was taking the gold bars from V. Kota in Chittoor district to Pernambut in Tamil Nadu."

A group of unidentified persons waylaid his car and robbed him of the gold at knifepoint. Following a complaint from KGF-based gold merchant Deepak Kumar at V. Kota police station on April 3, the police registered a case under Section 309 (4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Subsequently, the SP formed four special teams led by Deputy SP (Palamaner) D. Prabhakar, with police personnel drawn from V. Kota, Gangavaram, Baireddipalle, Special Branch, and Crime Investigation Department. The teams searched Karnataka and Tamil Nadu for the culprits by analysing CCTV footage.

On the night of April 5, the police teams intercepted an SUV and detained its four occupants during a vehicle check at Raghavapalli on V. Kota-Palamaner highway, finding their movements suspicious. During an interrogation, it was found that they committed the crime, according to the police.

The accused were identified as Jayapal (67), a councillor from KGF, Mukram (42), Babu (61), and Shanmugam (59), all from KGF. The police seized five gold bars weighing 3.5 kg and the vehicle.

The SP said that during the investigation, it was found that Mukram, a driver working for a jewellery merchant in KGF, passed on the information regarding the movement of Chetan Kumar to Jayapal, who executed the robbery. The SP said the special teams were still on the lookout for others involved.

After vocal protests, Kerala to form Waqf Board under new law

Outgoing Board is on an extended term after its tenure ended on Dec. 14, new Board will have to be formed under new law passed by Parliament

K.S. Sudhi
KOCHI

Kerala, which had vociferously campaigned against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, will be one of the first States to have a Waqf Board constituted under the new law.

The new Board may come into existence within two months as the tenure of the outgoing Board expired on December 14. The Board is on an extended term, with the Kerala High Court asking it to discharge its duties until the election process is over.

The CPI(M)-led government and the Congress-led Opposition had vehemently opposed the new legislation. The Kerala Assembly had passed a unanimous resolution asking the Union government to withdraw from the move to amend the Waqf Act. With President Droupadi Murmu giving her assent to the Bill on Saturday, the Act has come into effect in the country.

Election process

V. Abdurahiman, Minister for Waqf, said the government would shortly complete the process for the election of the new Board as envisaged in the newly passed Act. "We hope to complete the process within one month and the activities of the Board cannot be put on hold," he said.

The election of the new Board under the new law is warranted as the tenure of the existing Board had ended before the new enactment. The Boards in the States and Union Territories could continue till the expiry of their tenure.

The State government will have to redraw the election schedule and poll process in tune with the new legislation, though it recently initiated steps for the election of the new Board under the now-scrapped Act.

In protest: Muslim Youth League workers burning the Waqf Bill while Parliament was debating the legislation. SAKEER HUSSAIN

Pala Bishop criticises MPs for opposing Bill

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

Pala Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt on Sunday sharply criticised MPs from Kerala for voting against the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

He noted that Catholic bodies such as the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council and Catholic Bishops' Conference of India had conveyed their concerns to the MPs from Kerala.

"They could have abstained or at least explored intermediate solutions. But instead, they simply toed their party line," he said.

New daily train to link Rameswaram to Chennai

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The pilgrimage town of Rameswaram will be connected to various parts of the country by 15 pairs of trains, a spokesperson of the Railway Ministry said after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new Pamban Bridge on Sunday.

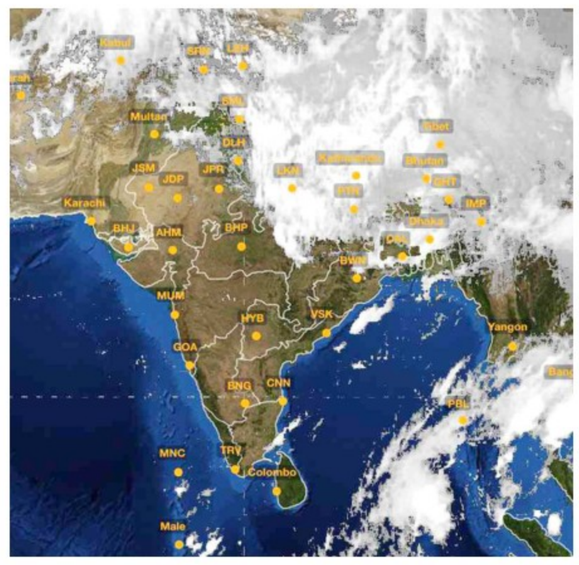
A new daily train, the Tambaram-Rameswaram-Tambaram Express, covers a distance of 617 km from Tambaram in Chennai to Rameswaram in under 12 hours, with an average speed of about 53 kmph.

The Tambaram-Rameswaram Express (train no. 16103) will depart from Tambaram at 6.05 p.m., and reach Rameswaram the following day at 5.45 a.m. The return train (16104) will start at 3.35 p.m. and reach Tambaram the next day at 3.10 a.m.

Tiruvarur, Thiruthuraipoondi, Pattukottai, and Aranthangi are among the train's stops. "For the first time, it is covering the districts of Tiruvarur and Pattukottai," the spokesperson said. The other 14 pairs of trains are extensions from Mandapam to Rameswaram: two mail express trains from Chennai Egmore; three passenger trains from Madurai; one mail express from Tiruchirappalli; two tri-weekly trains (one each from Tirupati and Kanyakumari); and six weekly trains (one each from Ayodhya, Coimbatore, Okha, Varanasi, Firozpur, and Bhubaneswar).

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heat wave to severe Heat wave conditions very likely in some parts of Saurashtra and Kutch and Rajasthan; Heat wave conditions in isolated pockets of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana-Chandigarh-Delhi, Uttar Pradesh.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	35.4	25.6	Kozhikode	—	34.8	26.0
Ahmedabad	—	43.0	24.5	Kurnool	—	39.5	26.7
Aizawl	—	35.0	18.4	Lucknow	—	38.8	19.5
Allahabad	—	41.4	19.6	Madurai	—	38.0	25.5
Bengaluru	0.1	33.3	23.4	Mangaluru	4.0	34.0	23.5
Bhopal	—	40.5	20.0	Mumbai	—	33.7	25.5
Bhubaneswar	—	38.0	25.4	Mysuru	—	—	—
Chandigarh	—	37.4	18.1	New Delhi	—	38.8	20.4
Chennai	—	34.4	26.3	Patna	—	39.2	23.4
Coimbatore	—	35.6	24.2	Port Blair	13.0	29.6	24.7
Dehradun	—	36.0	17.1	Puducherry	—	34.2	25.4
Gangtok	—	20.1	14.3	Pune	—	40.2	22.0
Goa	—	—	—	Raipur	—	40.8	24.9
Guwahati	—	30.4	20.1	Ranchi	—	36.2	22.3
Hubballi				Shillong	—	22.6	14.7
Hyderabad	—	37.0	24.6	Shimla	—	27.8	14.8
Imphal	6.0	31.6	15.7	Srinagar	—	26.2	7.6
Jaipur	—	40.7	23.3	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.8	26.6
Kochi	—	33.0	25.2	Tiruchi	—	37.7	26.0
Kohima	5.0	25.0	14.4	Vijayawada	—	37.4	25.0
Kolkata	—	36.3	27.2	Visakhapatnam	—	34.0	26.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.65	..40	..6	... 186	...161	
Bengaluru	.14	..20	19	 27	35	
Chennai	.21	1	42	 24	32	
Delhi	.58	116	49	... 267	...305	
Hyderabad	...9	..44	36	 87	...104	
Kolkata	.12	..23	21	 86	88	
Lucknow	.19	..43	34	... 161	...135	
Mumbai	..—	..38	.—	... 105	...140	
Pune	..—	..97	64	 74	...111	
Visakhapatnam	...8	..57	23	 36	82	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Hajipur, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 258 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 16.

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Kaliyattam nights

Divine and the mortal: The Kathiranur Veeran Theyyam performing at the Chulayadu Aduvapuram Vyail Kavu kaliyattam (festival) in Kannur on Sunday. In northern Kerala, the Theyyam season starts from October and ends by late May or June. S.K. MOHAN

Sri Lanka releases 11 Indian fishermen after Modi's pitch for 'humane approach'

Press Trust of India
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Sunday released at least 11 Indian fishermen as a special gesture, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched for resolving the vexed fishermen issue with a "humane approach".

The fishermen issue figured prominently in the talks between Mr. Modi and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Saturday.

"We also discussed issues related to fishermen's livelihood. We agreed that we should proceed with a humane approach in this matter," the Prime Minister said in a statement to the media after meeting Mr. Dissanayake.

"We also emphasised the immediate release of the fishermen and their boats," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake at Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka on Sunday. PTI

The fishermen issue has been a bone of contention in the ties between the two nations.

There have been several alleged incidents of Sri Lankan naval personnel using force against Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait, which is a narrow strip of water separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka.

At a media briefing on Saturday, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the fishermen issue was discussed in "considerable detail" between the two sides.

Impact on livelihood

"As the Prime Minister said in his remarks, there was an emphasis on the need to adopt a humanitarian and constructive approach to cooperation on these issues because these are ultimately issues that impact the livelihood of fishermen on both sides of the Palk Bay," Mr. Misri said.

"The Prime Minister emphasised that at the end of the day, it is a daily issue for the fishermen, and that certain actions that have been taken in recent times could be reconsidered," he added.

Need to intensify talks

The Foreign Secretary said both sides also emphasised the need to intensify the institutional discussions on the issue.

"Both sides are in touch with each other on the possibility of convening the next round of fishermen's association talks between Sri Lanka and India," he said.

Priyank attacks BJP over demand for CBI probe into party worker's death

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Attacking the BJP over the demand for a CBI probe into the death of its worker, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge on Sunday said that it was in the habit of politicising deaths, and that this would also join the long list of deaths over which BJP tried to take political advantage.

"Do you consider a WhatsApp message as a death note? Even if you did, does it name Congress legislators A.S. Ponnanna and Manthar Gowda? They (BJP) want to keep up its identity, and its leaders want to please the high command by politicising the deaths," Mr. Kharge told presspersons here. He pointed to the previous cases in which, he said, the BJP indulged in politics over death.

The Minister said that investigation was under way, and the truth would come out.

He asked, "Has anyone, including the legislators, opposed the investigation? The CBI has written to the State government, stating that it was under stress and could not handle more cases. It had sought personnel and vehicles from the State. Do BJP leaders not know about it?"

Further, he said, "When a youth in Bidar committed suicide, was my name there? They held a huge protest in Kalaburagi. Did they follow it up? They neither followed up with investigations nor raised the issue in the Assembly. They were not trying to find out the truth. The Kodagu case is part of lies being peddled by the BJP." Meanwhile, Home Minister G. Parameshwara also told reporters that there was no need for a CBI probe in the case, and that the State police were capable of handling it.

SNDP Yogam chief faces flak over remarks on Malappuram; many seek action against leader

The Hindu Bureau
MALAPPURAM

Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam general secretary Vellappally Natesan faced severe criticism from different sections of society in Kerala for his remarks against Malappuram district and Muslim community.

Mr. Natesan had said that Malappuram was the land of a particular community where backward Ezhava sections were living in fear without being allowed to even breathe freely, and were being denied political and socio-economic freedom.

The All India Youth Federation (AIYF) Nilambur constituency committee filed a complaint with the police against Mr. Natesan for 'deliberately attempting to cause communal divide in society.' The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) too filed complaints against the SNDP Yogam leader. The Indian National League (INL) demanded action against Mr. Natesan.

Congress leader A.P. Anil Kumar, MLA, said it

Vellapally Natesan

was high time the government initiated legal action against Mr. Vellappally. "His was a calculated statement aimed at destroying communal amity in Malappuram," he said.

Several organisations, including the Solidarity Youth Movement and the Sreenarayaneeya collective, demanded that the Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues P. Prasad, P. Rajeeve, V.N. Vasavan, and Saji Cherian should withdraw from the move to felicitate Mr. Natesan when he completes three decades in SNDP Yogam leadership on April 11.

Irrelevant, says IUML

Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) national general secretary P.K. Kunhalikutty dismissed Mr. Natesan's statement as irrelevant saying that he did not get even the support from a kitten. "His statement was irrelevant and vicious. The less we talk about it, the better," he said.

The INL demanded that Mr. Natesan be removed from the leadership of the Navodhana Samrakshana Samiti. Former IUML State general secretary K.P.A. Majeed described Mr. Natesan as the biggest opportunist the State ever saw.

Meanwhile, former BJP State chief K. Surendran supported Mr. Natesan saying that he had been right about Malappuram.

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The missing middle

No legislation finds bipartisan support in Parliament

The Budget session of Parliament was notable for reasons both good and bad. The sittings of the two Houses stretched beyond midnight to clear the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025. The debates reflected the significant divergence of opinion on the management of Waqf properties, but were held in a convivial atmosphere. The Chairs of both Houses were elated to preside over a productive session and the ruling BJP was content to find allies strongly on its side, particularly on the Waqf law amendment. Parliament also approved President's Rule in Manipur, following debates held past midnight. The Opposition was buoyant that it got to have its say. It had its constituents holding together, and it even attracted some fence-sitters on select issues during the session. The BJP not only managed to steer the legislative agenda but also played to the gallery to please its political constituency. It was, however, not all good news. Off the floor of Parliament, business advisory committee meetings of the two Houses saw sharp exchanges, in one instance prompting Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar to walk out. The stand-off between the Congress and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, on the Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, not being given adequate opportunities to speak, remained unresolved.

The vote on the Waqf Bill exposed the differences within the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) as well as the divergence between prospective allies, the BJP and the AIADMK. The BJD's decision not to issue a whip riled many within the party, more so considering BJD patriarch Naveen Patnaik's clear stance against the Waqf Bill. One of the reasons for the AIADMK-BJP split in 2023, was the regional party's fear of losing its minority voter base. The AIADMK voted against the Waqf Bill, underscoring its reservations about the BJP's agenda. While the YSRCP, the AIADMK and the BJD showed an eagerness to keep a distance from the BJP, the JD(U) and the TDP ended up in an embrace of their dominant ally. The merits of the Waqf amendments may be debatable but the government's refusal to take the Muslim community into confidence on an important piece of legislation is a classic sign of majoritarianism. Barring a nominated member in the upper House, no Muslim MP supported the amendments. The Waqf debate also highlighted the fact that the ruling alliance does not have a single elected member from the community in Parliament. Beyond the veneer of efficient outcomes, the session sharpened political and communal polarisation. Discussions should ideally expand the common ground, but this session failed on that count.

Tragedy of a commons

Courts and the state must not throttle free flow of information

While ordering the Wikimedia Foundation to undo changes on the Wikipedia page on Asian News International (ANI), the Delhi High Court said "people at large have a tendency to accept statements made on [Wikipedia's] web pages ... as gospel truth". In the hearing of the defamation suit that ANI had filed in 2024, the court had taken some questionable positions. For example, it sought the identities of the volunteers who edited the ANI page, whose anonymity the platform allows to protect them from retaliation. When the Foundation sought more time, the court observed: "We will close your business transactions here... We will ask the government to block Wikipedia... If you don't like India, please don't work in India." The Foundation had appealed for its right to safe harbour under the Information Technology Act 2000, but the court concluded in favour of the plaintiff because, it observed, "statements on the page pertaining to the plaintiff are all sourced from ... editorials and opinionated pages". Wikipedia is written and maintained by volunteers who are expected to follow the platform's guidelines. Unlike newspapers or scientific journals, the encyclopedia does not purport to publish new information; volunteers are instead expected to repeat with attribution or reproduce with references, information originally published elsewhere, with a preference for reputable sources. In this light, the court order is problematic.

Elements of truth today are often mistaken to be someone's opinions and vice versa. Politicians and government agencies have punished members of civil society for repeating an allegedly offensive claim rather than address the original claim itself. Opinions are rejected even as data is withheld to deny those who express them opportunities to align them with verifiable facts. In this case, the court had expressed concern for ANI's credibility, whether volunteers who edited the ANI page had followed the platform's guidelines in letter and spirit, and whether the opinion as expressed on the page could be allowed to stand. In the process, it established that the Foundation's ability to maintain the democratic structure that has allowed Wikipedia to become so popular and reliable is limited for India's users: to the extent of public tolerance for certain opinions. Ultimately, the aforementioned "people's tendency" and the state's ability to influence it put Wikipedia and similar decentralised collaborations at risk. That is a tragedy. These collaborations adopted their designs to sidestep the sort of centralised information control that some countries, including India, have sought. Courts and the state would do well to accommodate these collaborative efforts rather than treat them with contempt – and the people should engage with these efforts and their guidelines as well.

Prescribe preventive medicine for a healthy India

Dr. Prathap C. Reddy

is Chairman, Apollo Hospitals

India stands at the cusp of economic glory, aspiring to become a $5 trillion economy and a global powerhouse. However, there is a "silent epidemic" of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that threatens our economic and developmental ambitions. Today, NCDs are the leading cause of death in the country, accounting for roughly two-thirds of all deaths. To secure a healthy and prosperous future, India must urgently embrace a preventive health-care mindset – one that can heal before there is a need to heal.

The rising tide of NCDs, their economic toll

Over the past few decades, India has undergone an epidemiological transition. Communicable diseases such as infections have come under control but have been overtaken by NCDs. Chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, cancers, chronic lung diseases, and stroke kill an estimated five million to six million Indians each year. What is particularly alarming is that NCDs are striking Indians at younger ages.

India's working-age population is increasingly affected – a disturbing trend when its GDP target relies on the youthful demographic dividend. In fact, 22% of Indians over 30 years are at risk of dying from an NCD before they hit the age of 70. We see this mirror in our hospitals every month with 30- to 40-year olds with heart ailments or in need of dialysis due to diabetic complications.

Beyond the human cost, the economic impact of NCDs is staggering due to the resulting loss of productivity and reduced workforce participation. Studies estimate that NCDs may already be costing India around 5%-10% of its GDP. A World Economic Forum (and Harvard School of Public Health) study projected that between 2012 and 2030, NCDs would inflict a loss of around $3.5 trillion-$4 trillion on the Indian economy. Hence, an investment in preventive health care is not an expense but an economic strategy. Prevention is our best insurance policy for sustainable development.

The good news is that most NCDs are largely preventable. Sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy diets, tobacco and alcohol use, pollution, and genetic predisposition are some of the key culprits. By modifying these, we can significantly reduce NCD risk. It is estimated that about 80% of premature heart disease, stroke, and diabetes cases can be prevented by addressing lifestyle factors.

> With India facing a growing epidemic of non-communicable diseases, there needs to be awareness that 'one can heal before there is a need to heal'

Today, around 22%-23% of adults are overweight, and there is an urgent need to tackle obesity. We must make physical activity a part of one's daily routine with at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day, be it in the form of walking, yoga, or sports. A healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and proteins, and lower in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats is a must.

Air pollution is a health emergency directly impacting rates of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung cancer, and even heart attacks. We must view pollution control as part of preventive medicine.

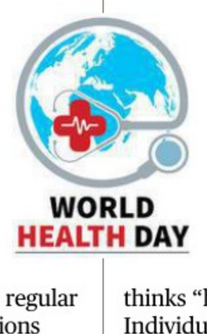
Finally, the most important measure is regular health screenings. Detecting these conditions early, through screenings starting at the age of 40 years or earlier if there is family history, can literally be a lifesaver. Early detection means timely intervention – controlling blood pressure before it causes a stroke, or removing a precancerous polyp before it turns into colon cancer. Screening such as mammograms for breast cancer or HPV tests for cervical cancer can find early, curable stages of disease.

Technology can transform prevention

Digital health technology – from smartphone apps and wearables to big data analytics – is a game changer. India has over 750 million smartphone users, which means we have the ability to deliver health advice, reminders, and risk assessments in the palm of everyone's hand. Wearable devices and health trackers allow individuals to keep an eye on their health stats. The integration of such real-time data into preventive care plans is an exciting new frontier.

Most transformative is the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in predictive health modelling. AI algorithms can analyse vast datasets to predict an individual's risk for various NCDs with remarkable accuracy. AI tools can analyse an individual's profile and generate a "health risk score" that forecasts the likelihood of, say, a cardiac event or developing diabetes over the next decade. AI also helps in early diagnostics – for instance, machine learning models can scan chest X-rays or computed tomography (CT) scans to detect early lung nodules or early signs of fatty liver that a human might miss, enabling pre-emptive action.

However, preventive medicine, augmented by AI, should always remain humane, compassionate, and patient-centric. Used responsibly, digital health and AI will be our greatest allies in making preventive care more proactive, precise, and accessible.



Fostering a 'preventive mindset'

Preventive medicine is not just a set of services but a mindset. I envision a future where every individual, community, corporate and government thinks "health-first" in every action and policy. Individuals must become the champions of their own health. I urge every reader to schedule that check-up you have been postponing and make small daily changes such as taking the stairs or cutting down on sugar to protect your well-being. Corporates and workplaces play a pivotal role by investing in employee wellness programmes – from annual health checks to in-house counsellors and fitness sessions.

Health-care providers must pivot from a reactive cure model to a preventive care model. The government's role is extremely important and initiatives such as the National Programme for Prevention and Control of NCDs and the establishment of Health and Wellness Centres that focus on screening and prevention are stellar steps. Beyond this, public policies should also be health-oriented: urban planning should create green spaces for exercise; education curricula should include health and nutrition, and food industry regulations should encourage reduced salt and sugar.

In the years that I have striven to make preventive care accessible and impactful, I have seen thousands of lives transformed because a disease was caught early or a risk factor was managed in time. Every individual has the power to make choices that guard their health. And those choices, scaled across 1.4 billion Indians, can help define our nation's health and happiness and ensure we reach our economic goals too.

Health and sanitation as the pillars of a healthy India

Swati Meena Naik

is Joint Secretary, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM)

On this World Health Day (April 7), as nations reflect on the foundations of human well-being, India stands tall with a transformative lesson: health and sanitation are not separate pursuits, but are two sides of a coin. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has undertaken a sanitation and water revolution that has not only changed the way we live but also how we thrive.

Rural missions that made a difference

The story of modern India cannot be told without acknowledging the contribution of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Grameen and the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). These programmes are not just about toilets and tap water alone. They represent a shift in the soul of the nation. These rural missions symbolise dignity, equity, and, above all, health.

When the Prime Minister launched the SBM from the ramparts of the Red Fort in 2014, he ignited a movement that has touched every Indian household, making it a people's movement – a Jan Andolan that was anchored in behavioural change and inter-generational equity. By 2019, India had declared itself Open Defecation Free (ODF) and taken significant steps towards achieving SDG 6.2 (it focuses on achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030) and also ending open defecation, 11 years ahead of time.

The SBM has been a powerful public health intervention. A World Health Organization (WHO) report estimated from 2014 to 2019, through the sanitation mission, over three lakh diarrhoeal deaths were averted. The Gates Foundation reported in 2017 that there were 58% higher cases of wasting among children in non ODF areas. A UNICEF study (2017) found that 93% of women felt safer after getting a toilet at home and ODF families saved ₹50,000 annually in health-care costs, ensuring higher savings. The SBM has improved environmental outcomes. Groundwater contamination in ODF villages is 12.7 times less likely, ensuring long-term health resilience in rural communities. A (2024) Nature study estimated that 60,000 to 70,000 child deaths are prevented every year due to improved sanitation access. These outcomes are not incidental, they are the result of sustained political commitment, inter-ministerial coordination, and community ownership.

> The story of modern India is connected to every link in the sanitation chain that results in a healthier and safer society

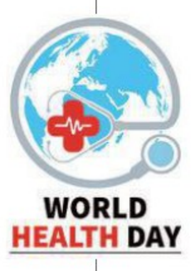
In 2019, the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched to ensure every rural household receives clean drinking water through a tap connection. This is more than infrastructure. It is an investment in human potential with far-reaching socio-economic impact. Research by Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Kremer has shown that nearly 30% infant deaths can be reduced if safe water is made available to families for drinking and 1.36 lakh child deaths (under five years) can be prevented with universal tap coverage. WHO estimates suggest that the JJM could avert four lakh diarrhoeal deaths with safe drinking water supply at home. And, 5.5 crore hours are saved every day, mostly by women, who had earlier spent time fetching water. State Bank of India research finds that the availability of water within premises led to increased participation by women in agriculture and allied activities.

The Sujal and Swachh Gaon campaign, launched to integrate water, sanitation, and hygiene at the village level, has further galvanised communities. Thousands of villages have already been declared Swachh Sujal, which is an important marker of holistic public health transformation. Improved water and sanitation systems are also leading to reduced out-of-pocket expenditure for rural households, reinforcing the preventive health-care model.

On the ground

Sanitation and water are the first line of defence in public health. They are the invisible shield that protects communities from disease, women from indignity, and children from lost opportunity. A healthy nation is a productive nation. A clean nation is a resilient one.

Today, more than 80% of India's rural households have tap water connections. Over 96% villages have been declared as ODF Plus, more than 5.07 lakh villages have solid waste management systems, and 5.23 lakh villages have liquid waste management systems in place.



Women are not just beneficiaries, they are also water testers, sanitation entrepreneurs, and local leaders. Over 2.48 million women have been trained to test water quality, and women-led Self-Help Groups are managing sanitation assets, recycling centres, and even sanitary napkin production. This is the vision of a Viksit Bharat where no child misses school because of a lack of water, no woman walks miles with a pot on her head, and no family loses a loved one to preventable illness.

The journey to health is the journey to dignity. A toilet brings privacy. Clean water brings opportunity. Waste management protects the environment. Each link in the sanitation chain connects directly to a healthier, safer society. The lessons we have learnt highlight the importance of inter-ministerial collaboration which is non-negotiable.

It is about convergence

Since, health is not the concern of one Ministry alone, it is the outcome of converged action across water, sanitation, nutrition, education, and rural development. We must recognise that India's model is not insular, it is global. Our innovations, community-led models, and use of technology whether through real-time dashboards, Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (or GOBARdhan) biogas plants, or plastic waste management units are blueprints for the world, especially the Global South. Lastly, we must continue to work through a mutual understanding that every rupee invested in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) yields manifold returns in health, productivity, gender equity, and environmental sustainability.

India is committed towards progressing forward on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and this World Health Day, we need to acknowledge and remember that good health begins not in hospitals, but in homes with access to clean water, safe sanitation, and a shared resolve. As we move forward, India remains committed to sharing its journey, collaborating globally, and co-creating a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bill and debate

I see the path taken, though individually, by some Members of Parliament, in challenging the Parliament-voted and approved Waqf (Amendment) Bill in the Supreme Court of India, as the rule of law. It is also reported that more parties are set to follow the route. If the allegation of there having been a violation of the Constitution is true, it is for the Court to hear and make a final judgment. Such scrutiny by the judiciary is as per law. It should also be conceded that if such provisions are or the whole Bill is found to be against the Constitution, a procedure to amend the Constitution also exists. Nobody can question the validity of such procedures being followed by the Houses.

Now for the other issue. Some parties have plans to take the issue to the streets. Political parties that are a part of parliamentary proceedings have no moral right to do so, disturbing the normal life of citizens. Street protests may be left to non-political groups. The present Opposition should also remember that it too would face the same situation if and when the INDIA bloc comes to power. The most unacceptable allegation is that from a senior party leader who found the Bill "passed by force".

Surely, parliamentary proceedings often have stories of disruptions and the passage of Bills without debates. But this time, it was not so. Both Houses of Parliament engaged in long debates. And there was also a vote in both Houses. No element of force was visible.

P.R.V. Raja,
Pandalam, Kerala

The article in the *Organiser* does cause some apprehension (Inside pages, "*Organiser* withdraws article after Cong. questions its 'motive'," April 6). The line in the magazine about the extent of the properties owned by the Catholic Church appears to be ominous. United struggles by all those who believe in the constitutionally guaranteed freedoms alone will thwart the right-wing's plans.

G. David Milton,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

It is heartening that our elected representatives respected the sanctity of democracy by engaging in constructive debate in the temple of democracy. All this while, the country has been a mute spectator to the loss of money as a result of frequent disruptions and adjournments in Parliament. In the end, only democracy emerged the winner in the debate.

S. Seshadri,
Chennai

'Listless Super Kings'

CSK losing on its home turf? The lions on the throne have become mice under it at Chepauk. Two losses at home on the trot is shocking. The team has to make amends and revive its fortunes to be contention for the playoffs.

K. Pradeep,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Bridging gaps, building resilience

Jasna K.A.

Research Scholar and Assistant Professor, P.M. Government College Chalakudy, Thrissur

Vipin Benny

Assistant Professor and Research Supervisor, St. Thomas College (Autonomous), Thrissur

World Health Day, celebrated on April 7, serves as a global call to action for accessible and fair healthcare. The theme for 2025, 'Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures', emphasises the critical role of maternal and newborn health, a particularly pertinent issue for India, which has a population exceeding 1.4 billion. India has made notable progress through programmes such as Ayushman Bharat, especially the Pradhan Mantri-Jan Arogya Yojana, which offers financial protection to more than 500 million beneficiaries. Health and Wellness Centres are designed to improve primary care, yet challenges such as staff shortages, inadequate diagnostic facilities, and irregular medicine supplies continue to exist. Although 70% of the population resides in rural areas, 35-40% of healthcare infrastructure is located there. To address disparities, India needs to invest more in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and encourage medical professionals to work in underserved regions. Policy support, enhanced infrastructure, and digital innovations like telemedicine are crucial for decentralising healthcare services.

Addressing disease burden

India faces a dual burden of persistent infectious diseases and rising non-communicable diseases, which now account for over 65% of all deaths. Sedentary lifestyles, poor diets, and tobacco use are driving conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. The 2024 International Diabetes Federation reported 101 million Indians with diabetes. Air pollution accounted for 1.6 million deaths in 2019, according to *The Lancet*, further underscoring the urgency of environmental health measures. According to NFHS-5, 35% of children under five are stunted, and 57% of women aged 15-49 are anemic. These indicators reflect broader socioeconomic challenges – poverty, lack of education, poor sanitation, and gender inequality. Government efforts such as Poshan Abhiyaan and the Integrated Child Development Services target malnutrition but require stronger data tracking, community engagement, and multi-sectoral coordination to be truly effective. While there has been progress, public health funding is still low. In the 2025-26 Union Budget, ₹99,858.56 crore (1.97% of the total Budget) was allocated to the Health Ministry. Moreover, high out-of-pocket spending continues to push 55 million Indians into poverty each year. A shift towards preventive healthcare – through screenings, school-based health programmes, and public health campaigns – is essential.

Harnessing digital health

India is experiencing significant progress in the realm of digital health. Programmes such as the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission and eSanjeevani have collectively facilitated over 10 crore teleconsultations. Nonetheless, the advantages of digital healthcare are not evenly spread. A mere 37% of rural households have Internet connectivity, and numerous patients and healthcare workers lack the digital skills necessary to effectively use telehealth services. If this digital divide is not addressed, technology could exacerbate healthcare disparities. Additionally, concerns about cybersecurity and the lack of strong data privacy laws might undermine public confidence. To fully realise the potential of digital health, India needs to invest in rural Internet infrastructure, provide training for front line workers, and implement comprehensive data protection regulations. Emerging technologies such as AI diagnostics, wearables, and remote monitoring hold transformative promise for early detection and disease management. These innovations must be adopted in a responsible and inclusive manner, ensuring that they benefit all communities, not just those in urban areas with tech-savvy populations.

Building resilience

India's health objectives are in line with Sustainable Development Goal 3, which emphasises good health and well being. Developed nations focus on public health infrastructure, universal insurance, and early childhood interventions – areas where India needs to make rapid progress. By capitalising on its youthful population, digital infrastructure, and pharmaceutical sector, India has the potential to emerge as a global health leader. India's G20 presidency in 2023 served as a platform to demonstrate leadership in vaccine equity, digital public goods, and health diplomacy. Aligning domestic initiatives with global frameworks such as the International Health Regulations and the Global Health Security Agenda will bolster pandemic preparedness and international collaboration. Mental health and climate resilience are equally pressing issues. The Tele-MANAS helpline and the National Action Plan on Climate Change and Human Health are worthy initiatives.

However, a 2023 NIMHANS study revealed that 14% of Indians suffer from some form of mental disorder, underscoring the need for increased investment and awareness. India must perceive health not merely as a social obligation but as a strategic investment. A cohesive, inclusive, and well-funded health system – rooted in innovation, equity, and resilience – is essential for achieving developed nation status. Through coordinated efforts across government, civil society, and private sectors, India can fulfil its vision of 'Health for All'.

A cohesive, inclusive, and well-funded health system is essential for achieving developed nation status

A paradigm shift in mental health policy

Institutional responses to suicides are often individualistic and reductionist

Sudarshan R. Kottai

On March 24, the Supreme Court of India formed a National Task Force to prevent the increasing deaths by suicide of students on campuses. It also directed the Delhi Police to register an FIR on the complaints of the family members of two students who had died by suicide while studying at IIT Delhi in 2023. That year, following a spate of deaths by suicide, the IIT Council led by the Education Minister directed IITs to ensure 'zero tolerance' to discrimination and provide a robust support system to students.

The institutional response to suicide is often individualistic and reductionist – it is almost always to appoint more psychologists on campuses. The socio-structural determinants of mental health, such as discrimination and biased institutional policies, are almost always left unattended. Even though counselling centres are active at all IITs, with the goals ranging from "creating a suicide-free campus", "creating a stigma-free and empathetic environment for issues related to mental health" to "creating a campus conducive to happiness and peace of mind for its residents", psychologists refrain from calling attention to the biased institutional policies that impact mental health.

For example, none of the official websites of the counselling centres at the 23 IITs employ the phrase "queer affirmative" or use trans-inclusive personal gender pronouns. Language is not just a collection of words; it is action. Gender identities, sexualities, and inclusive practices are areas of human experience and action in which language, knowledge, and power intertwine. The way language is employed strongly influences thinking, which, in turn, affects the way people act, bringing power into the equation.

The gender-sexuality exclusionary language points towards non-compliance with the existing legal frameworks and Supreme Court rulings. For example, official forms where gender by default has only two options – male and female – violates equal rights for representation of gender non-binary people that was granted by the Supreme Courtin the 2014 NALSA judgment. In 2023, the Supreme Court launched the Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes, recognising the need to use unbiased language, which not only reflects the judge's interpretation of the law, but also their perception of society.

Research has shown that pronouns are crucial linguistic resources for supporting trans and non-binary students and suggests strategies for a trans-affirming pedagogy such as collecting pronoun information and dealing with pronoun misuse. The deployment of gender pronouns signals identity-safety and promotes the perception that the institution is procedurally fair for sexual and gender diverse people. Using gender-inclusive pronouns and establishing inclusive frameworks and anti-discrimination policies are preventive public mental health care interventions that need to be prioritised as they de-escalate mental distress.

"Teachers talk only about grades. A grade is the parameter by which students are judged as good or bad," a student said. This is antithetical to the ethic of care that honours and respects the value of just being human. The objective of the classroom should not only be confined to producing intellectual scholarship but also to cultivating compassionate, non-judgemental, and empathetic communities.

Fragile attendance policies implemented idiosyncratically by teachers pose serious challenges to mental health. In order to cultivate cultural safety and empathy in the classroom, it is important that teachers and students interact regularly. In the context of documented institutional discrimination and its fatal mental health impact, classrooms are to be nurtured as safe, kind, and democratic spaces. The current policies on mental health, limited to increasing mental health services, need a paradigm shift to a bottom-up approach focused on the classroom that maps various experiences and nurtures sensitivity to contexts and diversities. Teachers are pivotal in this regard.

It is a major crisis in public mental health ethics that psychologists align with counter therapeutic institutional policies that violate existing constitutional and statutory safeguards. Counselling centres have to mobilise all possible resources at multiple levels so that care becomes the central value. Similarly, embedding ethics of care into institutional policies to respond to avoidable mental distress to make every human life meaningful is more important than landing a human on the moon.

Sudarshan R. Kottai is Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Palakkad

Three billion people cannot afford a healthy diet

A healthy, nutritious diet is much more expensive than a calorie sufficient one. As a result, three billion people cannot afford a healthy diet

DATA POINT

Hannah Ritchie & Pablo Rosado

A healthy diet is about much more than calories: we need a wide range of nutrient-dense foods to get all the vitamins and minerals that are essential for good health. In this piece, we look at the costs of diets around the world. Healthy diets are expensive – more than four times the cost of a basic, calorie-sufficient one. This is true in every country in the world. As a result, three billion people cannot afford a healthy diet, even if they spend most of their income on food.

Being able to eat a healthy, nutritious diet is one of our most basic human needs. Yet billions of people go without it; they suffer from 'hidden hunger', micronutrient deficiencies such as too little iron, calcium, vitamin A, or iodine.

There are many reasons why someone might not eat a nutritious diet. Often it's because people cannot afford to. First, consider the most basic requirement: getting enough calories. These could come in any form, but the cheapest option in most countries is starchy foods and cereals. Living on this 'energy sufficient' diet would mean eating only maize flour or rice for every meal, a diet that is severely lacking all other important nutrients. In terms of diets in poor countries, people get most of their calories from starchy foods.

A person can eat an energy sufficient diet on less than $1 a day, as per a study for the Food and Agricultural Organization's 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World' report. What does this mean for the affordability of a calorie sufficient diet? A diet is considered "unaffordable" when the diet cost plus expenditures for basic non-food needs are higher than incomes per person. In each country, food prices were measured at retail marketplaces specific to the local context. Non-food expenses in each country are estimated by looking at how much low-income people typically spend on things like housing and transportation.

By comparing the cost of diets with income distributions across the world, researchers estimated that 1.1 billion people could not afford the most basic energy sufficient diet in 2021 **(Map 1)**. That's 14% of the global population. These are the very worst-off in terms of nutrition.

An important question is how subsistence farmers fit in. They are included in these numbers: the income measure used to calculate the affordability of diets does take the value of subsistence farming (i.e. home production) into account. When the FAO report states that these smallholder farmers cannot afford a calorie-sufficient diet, it means they cannot produce one.

What people really need is a diverse and nutritious diet. Getting enough calories is important, but it is not sufficient to live a healthy and productive life. Eating only cereals and starchy foods will leave you deficient in protein, essential fats, and the wide range of micronutrients that our bodies need to function optimally.

Most countries develop 'food-based dietary guidelines' which provide recommendations on what a 'healthy diet' would look like. This includes guidelines on what balance of foods across the many groups – cereals, fruits, vegetables, legumes, meat and dairy – is considered best for long-term health.

The researchers also looked at the lowest-cost options to meet these national food-based dietary guidelines. Of course, there is no universal 'healthy diet', particularly when we consider the strong cultural differences in what people eat. So, the researchers selected dietary guidelines which were regionally representative: this means that we are not expecting that people in India or Japan will adopt the national dietary guidelines of the U.S., or vice versa.

Unsurprisingly, a diverse, healthy diet is much more expensive than a calorie-sufficient one. The researchers found that the average cost across the world was $3.67 per day.

When we put these prices in the context of affordability, we find that almost three billion people cannot afford a healthy diet. In many of the world's poorest countries – particularly across Sub-Saharan Africa – it's unaffordable (or not producible) for most of the population. This is shown in **Map 2** which gives these figures as a percentage of the total population. In many countries, a healthy diet is out-of-reach for more than 80%.

A useful way to bring context to food prices is to compare the cost of a healthy diet with the median income of countries across the world. In the poorest countries, the cost of a healthy diet is higher than the median income. Even if the average person in these countries spent all of their money on food, a healthy diet would be unaffordable. In some countries – India is the largest among them – dietary costs would be roughly equal to the median income. There, people would need to spend all of their income on food to afford a healthy diet.

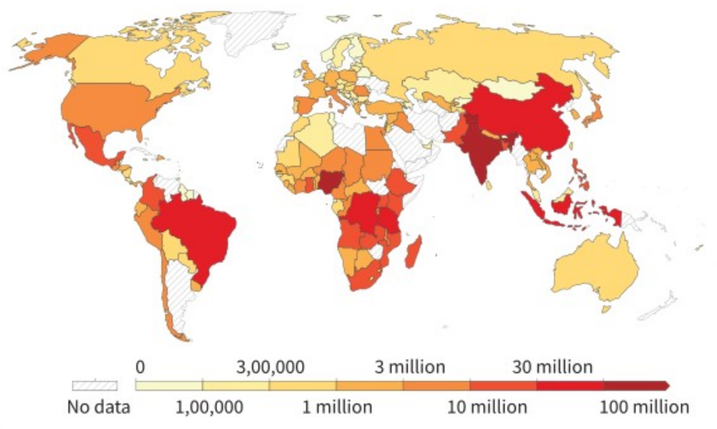
In rich countries, median incomes are much higher than dietary costs. In these countries the median income earner can afford a healthy diet with a relatively small fraction of their income. The average person in France could spend just 6% of their income on food and in Denmark, just 5%.

What this comparison shows is how far most of the world is from being able to afford a healthy diet. We cannot spend all, or even most, of our income on food. We would have very little to spend on other essentials.

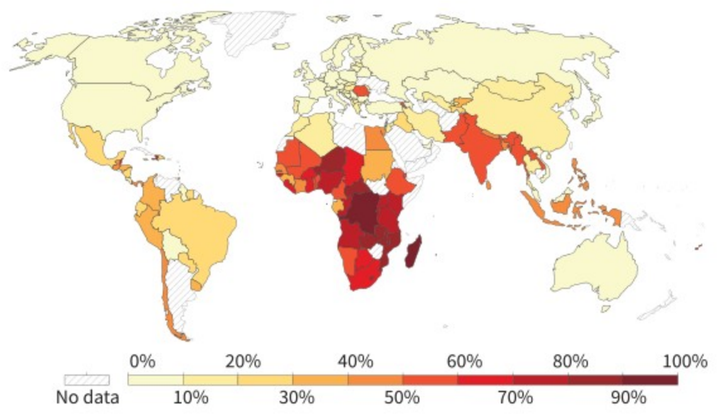
Two square meals

The maps were sourced from Our World in Data. Hannah Ritchie is the Deputy Editor and Pablo Rosado is the Principal Data Scientist at Our World in Data

Map 1: The map shows the number of people who cannot afford a calorie sufficient diet. Data for 2021



Map 2: The map shows the share of population that cannot afford a healthy diet. Data for 2022



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 7, 1975

Selective price control on drug formulations suggested

New Delhi, April 6: The Hathi Committee on drugs and pharmaceuticals has recommended a selective price control on drug formulations under a new formula instead of the present price control system which covers each and every formulation.

In its final report presented to the Petroleum and Chemicals Minister, Mr. K.D. Malaviya to-day, the 15-member committee, headed by Mr. Jaisukhlal Hathi, MP, has recommended lifting of price control on units having an annual turnover of less than Rs. one crore. At present units with an annual turnover of upto Rs. 50 lakhs are exempted from price regulation.

It has further suggested that formulations based on 13 essential drugs as identified by the committee for abolition of brand names should also be exempted from price control. In the case of bulk drugs, the committee has favoured exemption from price control on items in which there are no imports and which in terms of total sales and basic drugs do not exceed Rs. 25 lakhs annually.

In respect of other bulk drugs, the committee has suggested that the system of price regulation based on detailed cost examination should continue, subject to the price being so fixed that an efficient manufacturer is able to get a return on his capital which is a little higher than that available on formulations for the industry as a whole.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 7, 1925

Doctors and journalism

The London correspondent of "The Manchester Guardian" writes: I do not think there has been much notice in what the scientific papers call "the lay press" of the interesting compromise which the British Medical Association Council has arrived at on the delicate question of what they call "indirect methods of advertising." In the recent discussion of the B.M.A. the authorities did not go so far as to prohibit doctors from writing in the lay press, but there was a strong deprecation of "undesirable journalistic methods." It was suggested that doctors who write for the papers should make it a condition with the editors that there should be no laudatory comment of their achievements or headlines relating to their professional status, and photographs were gravely disapproved of.

From Page One

New Pamban bridge an engineering wonder: PM

The new structure, which has replaced the now-defunct British-era old Pamban railway bridge, is expected to enhance connectivity while benefiting trade and tourism in Tamil Nadu. With the Palk Strait being a highly corrosive environment, the bridge has been constructed with stainless steel reinforcement and features high-grade protective paint, the government said. The new bridge is three metres higher than the existing one.

Stating that the economy of the country had doubled in the past 10 years, the Prime Minister credited the faster growth to the availability of modern infrastructure. "We have increased investment in development of rail connectivity, roads, ports, airports, electricity and piped water supply, and gas supply by around six times," Mr. Modi said.

He further said that mega infrastructure projects are being implemented at a faster pace across the country.

Stalin asks Modi to allay fears over delimitation

"I had [earlier in the day] urged the Prime Minister to provide clarity on the issue during his visit to Tamil Nadu. But he has returned without addressing the people's key concerns. Those who ignore our demands must certainly be rejected – that is the response Tamil Nadu's people must give," Mr. Staline said at an event in Coimbatore.

The Chief Minister said he had sought an appointment with the Prime Minister to discuss how the proposed delimitation exercise could adversely affect Tamil Nadu and other southern States. "All political parties in Tamil Nadu have discussed this issue. After that, leaders from seven States met and adopted a resolution [at the JAC on Fair Delimitation]. We sought time to meet the Prime Minister. But, so far, we have not been granted an appointment," he said.

"This is a concern not just about reduced parliamentary seats but also a concern about our rights and future well-being," he said in Udhagamandalam.

Baby elected CPI(M) general secretary

Two more CC members, Yusuf Tarigami and P.K. Sreemathi, were granted exemption from the age rule. However, Mr. Prakash Karat, Ms. Brinda Karat, Mr. Sarkar, and Ms. Ali will be special invitees to the CC, along with the present special invitees, S. Ramachandran Pillai, Hannan Mollah, and Biman Basu. Sudeep Dutta, Bal Singh, John Brittas, and Sudhanva Deshpande will be permanent invitees to the CC.

Amra Ram, Vijoo Krishnan, Mariam Dhawale, U. Vasuki, K. Balakrishnan, Jitendra Choudhury, Srideep Bhattacharya, and Arun Kumar are the new entrants in the PB. In a rare development, D.L. Karad from Maharashtra contested against the official panel for election to the CC but was defeated.

Mr. Baby said the party would aim at building its independent strength besides seeking to achieve a coming together of Leftist forces. "We don't want to conceal the fact that there has been a decline in our strength. Unless we find out why this has happened, we will not be able to do a course correction," he said. With the aim of defeating the "neo-fascist BJP", the party would build a political opposition based on the circumstances prevailing in each State. In Kerala, where the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front is in power, the goal would be to retain power for a third term after the 2026 Assembly election, for which Mr. Vijayan would lead the party, he added.

Shah begins J&K visit, to review security situation

Home Minister to discuss spurt in militant activities in Jammu and will meet BJP MLAs; Hurriyat chief, another religious leader placed under house arrest, scores summoned to police stations

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Warm welcome: Union Home Minister Amit Shah being welcomed by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha upon his arrival in Jammu on Sunday. PTI

Two religious leaders, including Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, were put under house arrest, and scores of people were summoned to police stations in the Valley, as Union Home Minister Amit Shah embarked on a three-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday evening.

Mr. Shah was received by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha and Union Minister Jitendra Singh.

The visit comes against the backdrop of an uptick in militant activities in the Jammu region, where four policemen were killed in an encounter with militants in March, and growing infiltration attempts at the Line of Control (LoC). In Kashmir, the annual Amarnath Yatra will commence on July 3 and will require multi-tier security to keep militants at bay.

"Recent incidents [of militancy] in J&K will be seriously discussed. The party's activities and performance will be discussed," senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma said.

Official sources said that Mr. Shah and the J&K L-G will chair two separate security review meetings: the first at Unified Headquarters, to be attended by all security agencies; and the second with officials in Srinagar about the upcoming yatra. The Home Minister is likely to visit soldiers stationed at forward posts in the Jammu region "to boost their morale", officials said.

Mr. Shah will also be apprised of the functioning of the Union Territory's elected government by the BJP's 28 MLAs.

In Srinagar, he will be joined by J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to oversee the inaugurations and foundation stones of multi-crore projects.

Ahead of Mr. Shah's visit, Mr. Abdullah, during a function in Srinagar, said: "J&K has suffered a lot. But now, as the rest of the country progresses, we are also ready to become part of this journey. Although J&K has lost its official Statehood, mentally we still consider ourselves a State."

He was speaking at the third Lok Samvardhan Parv held in Kashmir University, which was also attended by Union Minister Kiren Rijiju. "Waqf properties belong to the poor, not for personal gain. The misuse will be stopped," he said. "Kashmir, which is full of talent in art, culture, and craftsmanship, needs to empower local artisans and connect them to national markets," he added.

Security beefed up

As Mr. Shah started his J&K tour, security was beefed up in the entire region. Extra checkpoints were set up and additional deployments made in many places across J&K.

Apart from the Mirwaiz, Shia cleric Aga Syed Mohammad Hadi was also placed under house arrest. Sources said that scores of local residents, especially separatist supporters, were summoned to police stations in central, south, and north Kashmir.

Jagjit Singh Dallewal speaks with presspersons after ending his hunger strike in Fatehgarh Sahib district, Punjab, on Sunday. PTI

Dallewal ends hunger strike after 130 days, says fight continues

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal on Sunday ended his hunger strike, which he had started on November 26 last year to press for various demands of agitating farmers, including a legal guarantee on the minimum support price for crops.

The announcement came a day after Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu appealed to him to end his fast-unto-death.

Mr. Dallewal announced that he was ending his indefinite fast at a 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' organised at the grain market in Sirhind in Fatehgarh Sahib district of Punjab.

At the same time, he asserted that their fight for the legal guarantee on MSP for crops and other demands continues.

"You all have said (to me) to end the fast-unto-death. For me, '*sangat*' (people) is '*rabb da roop*' (a form of God). I am indebted to you for looking after the agitation the way I had said. I respect your sentiments," said Mr. Dallewal.

"The '*morcha*' (agitation) continues. Even today, I do not want to end the indefinite fast, but you have asked me time and again (to end fast), and I respect it."

"But I want to ask you and get an assurance that we will have to put up a stronger '*morcha*'. The fight is on. The MSP (guarantee) has to be taken, and a bigger 'morcha' has to be put up," he told the gathering. "The government is alert, and it knows farmers can fight. The way you took care of the '*morcha*', the government has seen it," he said.

Only 12% of HC judges have declared assets: data

Soibam Rocky Singh
NEW DELHI

Among the 769 judges currently serving in the 25 High Courts of India, only 95 – or a mere 12.35% – have chosen to disclose their assets and liabilities on their official websites.

The alleged discovery of partially burnt currency notes at the residence of the High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma has intensified discussions about transparency within the judiciary, including the broader issue of asset disclosure among judges.

Currently, among the six High Courts where judges have declared their assets, the Kerala High Court leads with 41 of its 44 judges having completed the disclosure, accounting for 93.18%. The Himachal Pradesh High Court follows closely, with 11 out of 12 judges (91.66%) having done the same. In contrast, some courts report significantly lower disclosure rates. In the Chhattisgarh High Court, only one out of 16 judges has declared assets, and the Madras High Court lags with just five out of 65. The Delhi High Court has seven of its 38 judges declaring their assets – a sharp fall from 2018, when 29 of 35 judges had made public their assets.

Interestingly, Delhi's High Court archives list disclosures from 64 former judges – many of whom have either retired, been transferred, or elevated to the Supreme Court – some dating as far back as February 2010.

But the current numbers paint a different picture.

Public disclosure

Judges of only six High Courts have declared their assets on the court websites

ASSETS

High Court	Number of judges who declared their assets as on April 5	Current strength of judges
Chhattisgarh	1	16
Himachal Pradesh	11	12
Madras	5	65
Punjab and Haryana	30	53
Delhi	7	38
Kerala	41	44

Source: Websites of respective High Courts

Call for reform

Currently, out of 33 serving judges, 30 – including the Chief Justice of India, Sanjiv Khanna – have submitted their asset declarations, as displayed on the official website. A recent Full Court meeting on April 1 marked a significant shift – all 33 Supreme Court judges agreed to make their asset declarations public.

Their declarations will be made visible on the official top court website once the technical modalities are sorted out.

Back in August 2023, a Parliamentary Standing Committee submitted a report titled "Judicial processes and their reform", pushing for legislative changes.

It called upon the government to mandate annual property declarations for all judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court.

'Mandatorily furnish'

"The Supreme Court has gone to the extent of holding that the public has a right to know the assets of those standing for elections as MPs or MLAs. When so, it belies logic that judges don't need to disclose their assets and liabilities. Anybody holding public office and drawing a salary from the exchequer should mandatorily furnish annual returns of their property," the Parliamentary Standing Committee had said.

The committee didn't stop there. It pointed out that civil servants are already bound by rules requiring annual disclosures. Other constitutional authorities, like the Comptroller & Auditor General of India and the Council of Ministers, regularly upload asset details under their respective codes of ethics and conduct.

"For the judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts, there is a need to institutionalise the mechanism for regular filing of assets and uploading them in the public domain," the committee said.

SC Collegium recommends Arun Palli as CJ of J&K HC

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court collegium has recommended the appointment of Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Justice Arun Palli as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The collegium, headed by Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna, held its meeting on April 4. "The Supreme Court collegium has recommended appointment of Justice Arun Palli as Chief Justice of High Court of J&K and Ladakh," a statement uploaded on the top court website said.

Born on September 18, 1964, Justice Palli was elevated to the Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court on December 28, 2013.

In the past, SC has ruled that 'once a waqf, always a waqf'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

People protesting against the Waqf (Amendment) Bill at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. FILE PHOTO

Petitions in the Supreme Court primarily argue that the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, violates the court's own pronouncement of "once a Waqf, always a Waqf" to deprive the Muslim community of age-old tracts of Waqf lands and facilitate their conversion to private or government property.

Pleas by organisations such as the Samastha Kerala Jamaithul Ulema, represented by advocate Zulfiker Ali, point out that at the heart of the controversial law is an attempt to stamp control over huge tracts of Waqf property, spread across the country, which have belonged to the minority community for centuries.

The law, by expanding state control over Waqf assets and limiting the ability of individuals and subjecting Waqf properties to heightened scrutiny, was breaching the court's 1954 judgment in *Ratilal Panachand Gandhi versus The State of Bombay* which held that "transferring control of religious property to secular authorities is an infringement of religious and property rights".

In *Sayyed Ali versus Andhra Pradesh Waqf Board, Hyderabad* in 1998, the Supreme Court had declared 'Waqf' as a form of charity under Islam that has Koranic roots. Petitioner Anjum Kadari submitted "a Waqf is a property transferred to Allah". The court had pronounced that the nature of dedication of movable or immovable property, that is Waqf, for a purpose recognised by the Muslim law as pious, religious or charitable was "permanent". Hence, the court had coined the phrase 'once a Waqf, always a Waqf'.

"To infringe upon this sacred principle by attempting to alter the nature of Waqf properties is essentially an infringement and violation of the very essence of Waqf," the Ulema argued in its petition.

The petitioners, including Congress MP Mohammed Jawed and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, have argued that about 35 amendments introduced by the new law defeat the very objective of the original Waqf Act of 1995 to "better administer" Waqf properties.

In *K. Nagaraj versus Andhra Pradesh* in 1985, the Supreme Court had held that amendments which nullified the objectives of the original Act or statute could be struck down as "*ultra vires* or unconstitutional".

The petitioners point out that the amendments in the 2025 Waqf law get rid of concepts recognised by the top court, including that of "Waqf by user". As per Muslim jurisprudence, a Waqf could be created either verbally or under a deed, or by long use. When a land or property has been used for public religious or pious purposes for a long period by people belonging to the Muslim community, the land becomes "Waqf by User". The Constitution Bench in the *Ramjanmabhoomi* case judgment of 2019 had recognised "Waqf by User". However, the 2025 law has "eliminated" this concept and made deeds of dedication mandatory.

"A major percentage of existing Waqfs in India do not have a Waqf deed. These Waqfs came into existence centuries ago. They became Waqfs through Waqf by User," the Ulema submitted.

The new amendments have limited the ability of the Waqf Tribunal to recognise properties as Waqf based on historical usage, thereby violating Article 26, which guarantees religious denominations the right to manage their own affairs, Mr. Jawed argued.

The deletion of "Waqf by User" from the statute has now given a free pass to anyone to challenge the characteristics of centuries-old Waqfs and claim these properties to be private property or government property.

Pamban lift span gets stuck, official calls it 'teething trouble'

The Hindu Bureau
RAMESWARAM

The vertical lift span of the new Pamban railway bridge, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, caused concern among senior railway officials after it got stuck midway while being lowered.

However, a senior railway official dismissed the issue as a minor teething problem, which was eventually resolved.

While the Railway Ministry has described the new bridge as an engineering marvel, enabling ships to navigate beneath it and allowing faster train movement, the incident with the lift span proved embarrassing for officials.

The vertical lift span operates through an electromechanical system, controlled by computer software.

Officials said the 654-tonne vertical lift span can be raised to a height of 17 metres in five minutes and 30 seconds, with the same time required to lower it. On Sunday, the Pamban end of the span got stuck while being lowered, while the other end (Mandapam) came down in an uneven manner, leaving the span in a slanted position.

After nearly 30 minutes of troubleshooting, officials managed to bring down the span.

Modi launches Indian-aided railway projects on last day of Sri Lanka trip

Landmark railway modernisation projects implemented under the India-Sri Lanka development partnership represent a significant milestone in strengthening north-south rail connectivity in island nation, says PM; visit has reaffirmed deep cultural, spiritual ties between countries, he adds

Press Trust of India
COLOMBO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday travelled to the historic city of Anuradhapura in north-central Sri Lanka and launched two Indian-assisted railway projects before wrapping up his three-day trip to the Island nation.

Mr. Modi, accompanied by Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, visited the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi temple and paid respects at the revered Buddhist shrine in Anuradhapura, a spiritual city around 200 km from Colombo.

Following the visit to the shrine, the two leaders inaugurated the 128-km Maho-Omanthai railway line refurbished with Indian assistance of $91.27 million.

This was followed by the launch of the construction of an advanced signalling system from Maho to Anuradhapura, built with Indian grant assistance of $14.89 million.

"These landmark railway modernisation projects implemented under the India-Sri Lanka development partnership represent a significant milestone in strengthening north-south rail connectivity in Sri Lanka," the Ministry of External Affairs said.

"They would facilitate fast and efficient movement of both passenger and freight traffic across the country," it said.

Before leaving for India, Mr. Modi said his visit to Sri Lanka had reaffirmed the deep cultural, spiritual and civilisational ties between the two nations. "Deeply grateful to President Dissanayake, the people and the Government of Sri Lanka for the warmth extended during my visit," he said in a social media post.

Cultural connect: Prime Minister Narednra Modi with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake at the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi temple in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka on Sunday. PTI

"It will surely add momentum to our bilateral relations," he said.

'Strong links'

At the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi temple, the Prime Minister sought blessings from the head monk at the shrine.

"Offered prayers at the sacred Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura with President Dissanayake. It's a deeply humbling moment to be at one of the most revered sites in Buddhism," Mr. Modi said in a social media post.

"It is a living symbol of peace, enlightenment and spiritual continuity. May the teachings of Lord Buddha always guide us," he said.

The Ministry said Mr. Modi offered prayers at the revered Mahabodhi tree at the temple. It is believed that the sacred Bodhi tree at the temple has its origin in India's Bodhgaya. The sapling from the Bodhi tree was brought by Theri Sanghamitta, the daughter of Emperor Ashoka from India, and planted there in the precincts of the temple.

"The temple stands as a testament to the strong civilisational linkages that form the foundation of the close India-Sri Lanka partnership," the Ministry said.

Significant agreements

The Prime Minister arrived in Colombo on Friday evening after concluding his trip to Thailand. On Saturday, Mr. Modi and Mr. Dissanayake held extensive talks, following which they unveiled over 10 specific outcomes, including seven agreements to expand ties in several sectors such as defence, energy and digitalisation.

The agreement on defence is considered significant as it signalled an upswing in the India-Sri Lanka strategic ties nearly four decades after the IPKF episode.

The two sides also firmed up a total of seven pacts, including one on developing Trincomalee as an energy hub under a trilateral framework also involving the United Arab Emirates and another agreement on power grid connectivity.

Dissanayake says visit further solidifies bond

Press Trust of India
COLOMBO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka reinforces the island nation's important role in India's 'Neighbourhood First Policy' and 'MAHASAGAR' vision, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's office here said on Sunday.

Mr. Modi's "visit underscores the enduring relationship encapsulated by the theme "Friendship of centuries, commitment to a prosperous future", further solidifying the bonds between India and Sri Lanka," President Dissanayake's office said in a statement. This visit has enhanced the economic, cultural, and historical relations between the two nations, it added.

His visit is expected to yield significant results through collaborative initiatives "fostering a path towards mutual growth and development," it said.

Newly elected general secretary M.A. Baby addressing CPI(M)'s 24th All India Conference in Madurai on Sunday. G. MOORTHY

CPI(M) has decided to reconnect with the masses: M.A. Baby

C. Palanivel Rajan
MADURAI

The CPI(M)'s newly elected general secretary, M.A. Baby, on Sunday said that while the party recognised the decline of the Left in India, through introspection and self-analysis at its 24th congress, it had decided to move towards the masses and learn from them and, in turn, educate them.

Speaking at a public meeting organised by the party on the concluding day of its congress here, Mr. Baby said a global perception was created that the world was moving towards the right, but about 25% of the global population lived in countries ruled by Left parties.

"Cuba, Korea, Vietnam, China, Latin American countries and of late Sri Lanka were showing how the Left and progressive governments still prevail over the right-wing governments," Mr. Baby observed.

The perception that right-wing forces were growing in India was due to the "unfortunate grand influence formed by the reactionary forces" and certain media forces, he added.

Scientific socialism

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, addressing the gathering, said even when the world was moving towards more progressive governments, the ruling dispensation in India was refusing to stand with the struggles for liberation of the Palestine people.

However, he felt the rise of Left and progressive forces displayed that there was an overall rise in the acceptance of scientific socialism. "The ruling BJP government in India, through divisive policies such as the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, was planning to divide the people based on their religion," he said. This was not just a ploy against Muslims but against the minorities as a whole.

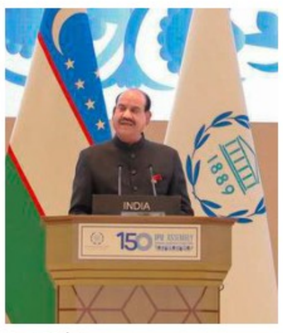
Birla says Parliament passed many laws to promote social justice

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The inclusive and welfarist nature of the Constitution of India integrates marginalised and backward sections of society into the mainstream of progress, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Sunday.

He was delivering the keynote address at the 150th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Speaking on "Parliamentary action for social development and justice", Mr. Birla said that in recent years, the Indian Parliament had passed several laws that promoted social justice and security. He said Bills, including the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016; Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019; and Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 safeguard the interests of all sections. He



Om Birla

referred to the new labour laws and codes passed by Parliament for the "welfare and social security of workers in the unorganised sector". Mr. Birla said India was playing a leading role in the world in innovation, AI, start-ups, space and defence technology, IT, fintech, and pharmaceuticals.

On the sidelines the summit, Mr. Birla met Tran Thanh Man, President of the National Assembly of Vietnam, and emphasised the close ties between the two countries.

PM greets workers, highlights good governance on BJP's foundation day

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the Bharatiya Janata Party's good governance agenda was reflected in the historic mandates it had received, a sentiment he expressed on the party's 45th foundation day.

Mr. Modi greeted party workers and leaders on the occasion on social media platform X. "The people of India are seeing the good governance agenda of our party, which is also reflected in the historic mandates we've received in the years gone by, be it in the Lok Sabha elections, Assembly elections across different States and various local body polls across the nation," he said in a post.

BJP president and Union Health Minister J. P. Nadda, at a function at the party headquarters in New Delhi to mark the occasion, said the BJP's ideology had a strong connection with India's traditions, culture, and values, and the BJP is "an ideologically based and a mass-based party".

Day to remember: BJP chief J.P. Nadda and other leaders during the party's foundation day function on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

'Scientific growth'

Mr. Nadda said the party had had "scientific growth" in terms of its organisation and in winning elections, calling this a well-planned process. "The BJP is the only political party which has had scientific growth. To take forward and grow an organisation is also a science, and to win elections is also a science. It is the BJP's commitment to fulfil it without compromising its ideological principles," he said.

Emphasising the importance of remembering the BJP's roots from just two seats in 1985 to being in power now, he told party workers and leaders that they should take out the time to meet with the

At Delhi event, Nadda stresses the importance of remembering the party's roots

founding members of the the party in order to stay in touch with its roots.

The party currently has over 240 members in the Lok Sabha and over 98 in the Rajya Sabha, along with over 1,00,000 active workers, the BJP president said. He further highlighted the party's success in forming governments in several States, noting the BJP's sixth consecutive term in Gujarat; third term in Goa and Haryana; fourth term in Madhya Pradesh; and second term in Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, and Tripura.

"After 27 years, we have formed the government in Delhi as well," Mr. Nadda said.

5 new members from Bengal join CPI(M) Central Committee

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Two new women leaders from West Bengal have been inducted into the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Minakshi Mukherjee, a prominent youth leader, is among those included in the party's highest decision-making body.

In the newly elected Central Committee, finalised during the 24th congress of the party held in Madurai on Sunday, five new members from Bengal were chosen to join the 85-member committee.

In recent years, Ms. Mukherjee, who serves as the president of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), has emerged as one of the most influential youth leaders for the Left in West Bengal. The 40-year-old leader gained prominence when she contested the Nandigram seat during the 2021 Assembly election against political heavyweights such as Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Suvendu Adhikari o the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Other names

The other new names from Bengal are Kaninika Ghosh, State secretary of All India Democratic Women's Association; Syed Hussain, Purba Bardhaman district secretary; Saman Pathak, a trade unionist representing North Bengal's tea gardens; and Debabrata Ghosh, Hooghly district secretary.

With these additions, there are now a total of 15 members from Bengal in the Central Committee.

BJP trying to misuse Waqf Act to seize land, say Opposition parties

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A day after President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, Opposition parties and organisations representing the Muslim community have raised serious concerns about the law.

On Sunday, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray alleged that after rolling out the Waqf law, the Bharatiya Janata Party is now eyeing the land belonging to Christians, Jains, Buddhists, and even Hindu temples, for the party's "friends", an apparent reference to industrialists perceived as being close to the ruling regime.

"It is time people wake up now and open their eyes as the

Parties allege that the BJP was eyeing the land belonging to Christians, Jains, Buddhists, and even Hindu temples

BJP has made it quite clear in the public about their intentions in the coming days," he added.

In Nashik, Congress State president Harshvardhan Sapkal criticised the Union government, saying, "Inflation is sky-high, Marathi schools are shutting down, there is no employment, and yet the Central government has handed us a distraction – the Waqf Board."

"When the British decided to set up their capital in Delhi and undertook land acquisition, it was demanded that places of worship be protected. Thus, the 1913 law for rehabilitation created the Waqf Board to ensure the security of religious sites, giving special rights to temples, mosques, and gurudwaras. The BJP is now trying to misuse the Waqf Reform Bill to seize land. But their real aim is the massive gold reserves at the Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala," he alleged.

In a post on X, NCP (SP) leader Jitendra Awhad said that after the Muslims, the Christians would be the next to be targeted. "An article in the RSS mouthpiece, *Organiser*, has said that it is not the Waqf Board but the Catholic Church of India which is the largest landholder in the country," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
TAMIL NADU URBAN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT BOARD
No. 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai - 600005, Tamil Nadu, India.

Invitation for Bids No: IRSHUPSP/NCB/05

ADB Loan No. and Project Title: 4106-IND: Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Housing for Urban Poor Sector Project in Tamil Nadu.

Contract No. and Title: IRSHUPSP/KOT/05, Construction of 158 (Partial Stilt +5 floors) tenements including Development works at Kothandaramar Street scheme, Washermanpet in Corporation Division 42, Zone- IV at Chennai District.

The Superintending Engineer, Project Monitoring Unit, on behalf of Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board ("the Employer") invites bids from eligible bidders for the contract package named above. Bids are invited under Open Competitive Bidding (OCB) - National procedure of ADB which is open to all bidders from eligible source countries of ADB.

1. Detailed Notice of Invitation for Bids (IFB) and the Bid document for above package would be available at **www.tntenders.gov.in** starting from **07.04.2025.** Deadline for bid submission is **16:00 hours on 06.05.2025.** All required information are provided in the bid document.
2. Online & Offline Pre-bid Meeting will be held at **14:00 hours** on **17.04.2025.** All the prospective bidders are advised to participate in the Pre-bid meeting.
3. Any addendum, clarification to the bidder's queries and corrigendum etc. will be published on the **www.tntenders.gov.in** web site and will not be published in Newspapers.
4. Bidders may contact Superintending Engineer, Project Monitoring Unit, TNUHDB for any other information on bidding process.

DIPR/1371/TENDER/2025 — Superintending Engineer, Project Monitoring Unit, TNUHDB.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUPATI
TENDER NOTICE
e- Procurement of Medicines required to TTD Hospitals/Dispensaries for day to day consumption through e-tenders in view of expiring validity of previous tenders for a period 12 months (365 Days) from the date of award.

Bid document downloading start date &time	:	07-04-2025 @ 10.30 AM
Bid submission closing date & time	:	03-05-2025 @ 5.00 PM

For more details, please visit **https://tender.apprecurement.gov.in** (or) **www.tirumala.org**
TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC (Adv.No.07) Date:04-04-2025 — **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
Office of the Chief Engineer (Project)
3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009.
No: BWSSB/CE(P)/ACE(Cstr&DCW)/22/2025-26 Dated: 05-04-2025

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites Tenders in Two Cover System from eligible Contractors for the work of **Procurement of 1500 Nos. of DI Pressure Machine Hole Rings and Covers.**
Amount Put to Tender: Rs. 4,56,73,080/- **EMD: Rs. 6,86,000/-**
Last Date and Time for Submission of Completed Tender Document is on **21-04-2025 before 16.00 Hours.** The Technical Bids will be Opened on **22-04-2025 at 17.00 Hours.** The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-Procurement Portal Process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Project)
DIPR/CP/Adverto/112/2025-26

INBRIEF

FPIs pulled out ₹10,355 crore from equities due to U.S. tariffs

Foreign investors withdrew ₹10,355 crore from the equity markets in the last four trading sessions this month owing to sweeping tariffs imposed by the U.S. on most nations, including India. "The outflow occurred after a net investment of ₹30,927 crore in the six trading sessions from March 21 to 28. This infusion helped reduce the overall outflow for March to ₹3,973 crore," according to data from the depositories. In February, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) pulled out ₹34,574 crore, while the outflow was higher at ₹78,027 crore in January. This shift in investor sentiment highlighted the volatility and evolving dynamics in global financial markets. PTI

'XR Creator Hackathon' by Wavelaps enters final lap

Having started with more than 2,200 participants from all over the country, the 'XR [extended reality] Creator Hackathon', organised by Wavelaps in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, is in its last stage of evaluation, with finalists being reviewed closely by a distinguished jury."The XR creator hackathon is designed to push the boundaries of Extended Reality (XR) in sectors such as entertainment, tourism, education, healthcare, and e-commerce. More than a competition, it is a movement to position India at the forefront of immersive technology," an official said.

Aircraft carriers key to winning sea battles: French Navy officer

It is necessary to transfer skills of operating a carrier from one generation to the next, says Captain George Florentine of aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle*; Rear Admiral Jacques Mallard stresses need to build partnerships in the Indo-Pacific

Dinakar Peri
ONBOARD CHARLES DE GAULLE OFF GOA

Aircraft carriers are the "key" to winning battles at sea, says George Florentine, Captain of the French aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle*.

Several nations in the Indo-Pacific have been fielding more and bigger carriers despite questions about their viability. The French Navy too is looking to induct a new carrier by 2038 while the Indian Navy's proposal for a second Indigenous Aircraft Carrier, a repeat of the *INS Vikrant* with some modifications, is awaiting approval of the Defence Acquisition Council.

"Many nations want a powerful Navy and they are building carriers. A key concern has been the need to transfer the skills of operating a carrier from one generation to the next, so that the new generation can operate a bigger carrier with newer technologies... and can win the battle at sea," he said, while speaking to *The Hindu* on board the *Charles de Gaulle* during the bilateral naval exercise Varuna held in the Arabian Sea off Goa from March 19 to 22.

French carrier *Charles de Gaulle*, as seen from a helicopter soon after taking off, in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Goa. DINAKAR PERI

On naval cooperation, Captain Florentine, who took part in the first edition of Varuna as a young officer, said things have changed since those times. "Nowadays, we have good camaraderie, we can exchange a lot of information. When you want to operate together at the sea, it is important to talk to each other," he said, stressing on communication. "We need to have same procedures, which is not exactly the case with India but our procedures are close enough to be able to cooperate closely. What is important is that you know your counterparts. That is why we have commanding officers visit each other's ships to build trust," he stated.

The *Charles de Gaulle* also exercised with a U.S. carrier and Japan's helicopter carrier.

As Exercise Varuna was under way, Rear Admiral Jacques Mallard, Chief of the French Carrier Strike Group, stressed that building partnerships in the Indo-Pacific reflects the interest in maintaining the status quo, showing that the "common space which is the high seas needs to be shared".

A new wave of maritime activity is under way in the Indo-Pacific region amid the rapid expansion of the Chinese Navy and its presence in the Indian Ocean Region. As per the U.S. Department of Defence, Chinese Navy is the world's largest with over 370 platforms.

Rafale sparks interest

The nuclear-powered *Charles de Gaulle* operates Rafale-M fighter jets, E-2 Hawkeye early warning aircraft and helicopters. Joint operations with the Rafale-Ms were of particular interest to the Indian Navy as it is looking to induct them in a few years. A deal for 26 Rafale-Ms is awaiting final approval from the Cabinet Committee on Security and expected to be signed this month.

Rear Admiral Mallard said the Indian side had a lot of questions about the Rafales when they visited the ship and spoke to their French counterparts. He also noted that Indian Navy pilots already had good knowledge of the Rafales as the Indian Air Force operated the jets. "Most of the questions were concerning the handling (the jets) on board the aircraft carrier," he stated, adding that they were shown the hanger, their handling, and how they are transported.

Captain Guillaume, Carrier Air Wing Commander onboard *Charles de Gaulle*, said the joint training during Exercise Varuna was "very profitable" and they their way of working was very close to the operations in India. On the operation of the air wing on the *Charles de Gaulle*, he added, "We have close to 100% availability of the jets everyday, we are able to have up to 40 to 50 flights each day from the carrier."

The Chinese Navy operates two aircraft carriers, *Liaoning* and *Shandong*, both of which are conventionally powered and use ski-jump ramps to launch aircraft. The third, *Fujian*, with a displacement of 80,000 tonnes and electromagnetic catapults to launch aircraft, has completed seven rounds of sea trials. A fourth carrier, likely to be nuclear powered, is under construction.

Terminated workers of Maruti stage protest, held

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Nearly two dozen terminated Maruti workers were detained by the Haryana Police at Sonipat on Sunday while calling for their reinstatement. The agitating workers were also seeking permanent jobs for the company's former temporary workers at its Kharkhoda plant, one of the biggest in the country.

Around 200 Maruti workers who were terminated following violence at the company's Manesar plant in 2012 have been agitating for the past six months under the banner of the Maruti Suzuki Struggle Committee, seeking reinstatement. In January, these agitating workers brought together the former non-permanent workers of the company, forming the Maruti Suzuki Asthayi Mazdoor Sangh to fight for the company's temporary workers.

Maruti Suzuki Struggle Committee member Khusiram, who was among those detained in Sonipat, accused the police of "oppression" alleging that the workers were not allowed to hold a peaceful agitation, despite having informed the district administration in advance.

Semaglutide reduces cardiovascular event risk in diabetes patients: study

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Diabetes management should not be focused narrowly on blood sugar levels, but must concurrently work at protecting cardiac and renal health too, says a recent study that found daily oral semaglutide (an anti-diabetic medication used for the treatment of type 2 diabetes and an anti-obesity medication used for long-term weight management) could cut the risk of heart attacks, strokes, and cardiovascular death by 14%.

In a Phase 3 trial of people with diabetes, the study, called SOUL, tested Rybelsus – Novo Nordisk's diabetes drug administered in oral form – against a placebo, in trial participants already receiving standard medications.

Semaglutide was approved in June 2021 for chronic weight management in those with obesity and at least one weight-related condition, in addition to diet and exercise.

Semaglutide was approved for chronic weight management in those with obesity and at least one weight-related condition. GETTY IMAGES

The SOUL trial was initiated in 2019, with the key objective to demonstrate that oral semaglutide lowers the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (a composite endpoint consisting of cardiovascular death, non-fatal myocardial infarction and non-fatal stroke) compared with placebo, both added to standard of care in patients with type 2 diabetes and established Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD).

"The SOUL trial demonstrates statistically significant reductions in the primary composite endpoint of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), encompassing myocardial infarction, stroke, or cardiovascular death, in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and established CVD and/or CKD. The data reinforce oral semaglutide's role as the first and only approved oral glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonist (GLP-1 RA) to achieve a significant reduction in cardiovascular risk within this high-risk population," V. Mohan, chairman, Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, said.

A.G. Unnikrishnan, CEO and chief of endocrinology at the Chellaram Diabetes Institute, Pune, said the SOUL trial has shown that it can reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events, regardless of whether participants were already using sodium-glucose cotransporter-2 inhibitor (SGLT2i).

Following public outcry, J&K panel meets stakeholders on quota issue

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Facing a public outcry, a three-member Cabinet Subcommittee of the Jammu and Kashmir government on Sunday met stakeholders, mainly students, over the issue of a revised reservation policy that reduced the "open merit" category to less than 40% of the positions following Central rule in the Union Territory.

In an affidavit submitted to the High Court, the J&K government had opposed a petition filed by an open merit quota aspirant, and termed it a "misuse of judicial process" and "non-entertainable".

With Opposition parties criticising the affidavit strongly, Social Welfare Minister Sakina Itoo, who heads the panel, promised a report within six months. "The government is fully committed to fulfilling its promises regarding the issue. We assure everyone that the Cabinet subcommittee on Reservations will give its report within six months," Ms. Itoo said.

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, left, with Minister Sakina Itoo, right, and JKNC president Farooq Abdullah in Srinagar. FILE PHOTO

Poll promise

Sameer Yousuf, an educator and engineer, said he had voted in the 2024 Assembly election upon the promise of rationalisation of reservation by the National Conference (NC).

"During the meeting, the committee reiterated that it would submit a report in six months and fulfill the promise. On the government's strongly worded affidavit filed in the court, the Minister said, 'it can be changed'. We want the right to equal opportunity through rationalisation of the reservation policy," Mr. Yousuf said.

Referring to the meeting at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre here, Ms. Itoo said the government was "actively engaging with stakeholders".

"We met various delegations and received their representation. We are examining the representations. The committee's final report will shut the mouth of those who are doing drama on the issue," the Minister said.

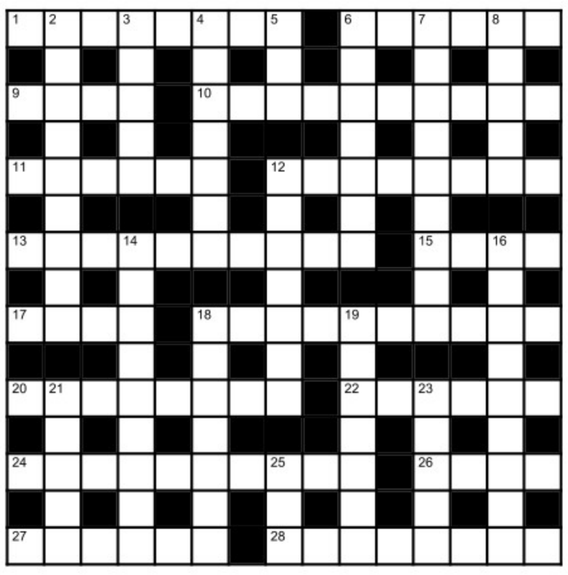
Chief Minister Omar Abdullah constituted the Cabinet subcommittee "to review and recommend measures related to reservations". An official spokesperson said the committee was mandated "to take the viewpoint of every section of society to arrive at an amicable solution where everyone's interest is safeguarded".

TH CROSSWORD + 14452

(set by Gussalufz)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Professional 16 steal around ten A.M. roughly (4-1-3)
6 This second remedy contains cocaine (2,4)
9 Racist exposed by Benazir (4)
10 Free treatment area mostly second-rate? Shocking (10)
11 Shot a husband for smoking pipe (6)
12 Fried potato piece hotel's cooked without hot pepper (8)
13 Fruit guy seen (got bananas) (10)
15 Abruptly cancel periods (4)
17 Setter went ahead, reviewed restaurant (4)
18 Ship uniform settling last IOU, sir (6,4)
20 Shrink from touch involving hand (8)
22 Oddly ousted in Jammu, a month after returning unopposed (2,1,3)
24 Flatter pitch is back in India, good for day three: both sides (10)
26 It's over in Group One (4)
27 Cross groom primarily restrained by his partner (6)
28 In hindsight, boss, er..., pseudoephedrine incorporates a strong concoction (8)

Down

2 Fancy beer served up with some salt (9)
3 Opener and #6 skip cricket batting stunt (5)
4 Bows after mass demonstrations (7)
5 Tender boy's basic instincts (3)
6 Conflict over uranium sale (7)
7 Watching people and going potty: king, queen, son (9)
8 Horrible ulcer causing distress (5)
12 Drug dealer's revolutionary spray? (7)
14 Leader of government spread rubbish, was flashy (9)
16 They protest, being a cranky sort, after a girl has sex (9)
18 Young celebrity's tip: getting up with alarm (7)
19 A dangerous drive, going places (2,3,2)
21 He has some "unknown error" (5)
23 Curses a public transport with energy (5)
25 One or two letters before C, e.g.? (3)

SUDOKU

5								
	4		5	6		3		
		6		1	2		9	
3		9			8		1	
8				7				5
	1		6			7		9
	2		9	4		8		
		3		8	5		4	
								1

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

T	H	R	O	U	G	H	C	H
O	P	P	E	R	U	A	O	C
E	E	I	L	A	N	A	S	T
R	A	F	F	I	C	C	O	P
D	T	O	T	T	K	P	C	R
I	S	I	S	O	P	E	N	E
Y	E	D	E	N	D	E	R	I
D	I	O	M	A	T	I	C	G
R	O	S	S	U	N	E	A	B
E	T	S	D	E	T	E	R	R
E	N	T	A	O	G	T	N	E
P	R	O	F	O	R	M	A	C
O	F	F	E	E	N	T	O	I
R	C	O	R	R	I	V	A	L
R	Y	O	V	I	D	W	U	E
S	P	U	E	A	L	V	E	O
L	I	S	T	I	R	F	R	Y

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	3	6	8	2	9	1	7	5
5	1	9	4	7	6	8	2	3
2	7	8	3	1	5	6	9	4
1	4	7	9	8	2	3	5	6
8	6	2	7	5	3	4	1	9
9	5	3	6	4	1	2	8	7
7	9	1	2	6	4	5	3	8
3	2	4	5	9	8	7	6	1
6	8	5	1	3	7	9	4	2

FAITH

Ramayana, guiding factor

Tiruvalluvar says "Learn everything that has to be learnt thoroughly and conduct life worthy of such learning." One need not look further than the Ramayana to learn everything necessary to lead a meaningful life in this birth and progress towards God, said Damal S Ramakrishnan.

Whenever a devotee listens to Ramayana, he not only finds answers to his many problems in life (since the characters in Ramayana undergo similar challenges), but also derives the immense benefit of receiving the blessings of his ancestors. Only Ramayana possesses this ability.

Every canto in the Ramayana has a moral guidance. Bala Kandam highlights the importance of obeying one's parents and the efficacy of a guru's benediction. Rama obediently followed Viswamitra on Dasaratha's bidding and he achieved everything a student should aim for. He overcame Tatakai and won the hand of Sita by bending the bow in Janaka's court, by obeying his guru, Viswamitra.

Ayodhya Kandam highlights the importance of family unity. When Rama is banished to the forest, he accepts it with a smile, genuinely happy that his brother is getting the kingdom meant for him.

In Aranya Kandam, when Rama assures sages who complain against Ravana's atrocities that he would take care of him, Sita asks, "How can you agree to destroy someone who has done you no harm?" Rama explains the dilemma succinctly: "When someone surrenders to me, it is my dharma to protect them, even if I have to separate from you, I have to do it."

Kishkinda Kandam is an ode to friendship. He tells Sugriva, your joy is mine, your sorrow likewise mine.

Onward march: Comex gold posted an impressive 10.1% gain in March. REUTERS

Gold, silver scale new heights on U.S. tariffs

PRECIOUSMETALS

B. Krishnakumar

Precious metals continued to sail higher with both gold and silver recording handsome gains in March. Comex gold breezed past the psychological $3,100 mark to scale a fresh all-time high.

The sentiment toward the precious metals was bolstered by the concerns about the fallout from U.S. tariffs. The expectations of interest rate easing by the Federal Reserve also played a part in perking up the sentiment towards the precious metals.

Comex gold posted an impressive 10.1% gain in March to end the month at $3,157.40. Comex silver, too, regained its sheen and posted a 9.65% gain to settle at $34.76 an ounce, by the end of March.

Rupee effect

The performance of precious metals in the domestic market was slightly muted due to the strengthening of the Indian rupee. As a result, MCX gold gained 6.8% to settle at ₹90,820 per 10-gram at the end of March. MCX silver settled at ₹1,00,001 a kilogram, representing a 5.8% gain in March.

After a strong performance in March, precious metals turned over-extended from their mean and a cool off has happened in the past few days. After moving to the earlier mentioned target of $3,050-$3,100 Comex gold price has taken a sharp knock recently. The short-term outlook is negative, and the price could drop to $2,980-$3,000. The long-term trend however remains positive, and the price could resume its uptrend on the completion of the anticipated short-term cool off.

Comex silver managed to breakout above the key resistance at $33.6 and the price gathered momentum thereafter. Similar to gold, silver price too took a drubbing in the past few trading sessions. Fears of a recession and announcement of reciprocal tariff by China dented sentiment towards silver. The recent weakness is likely to persist and Comex silver price could test next support zone at $26-$26.50.

Mirroring the sentiment in the global markets, the MCX gold price too managed to hit record highs. As anticipated last month, the price achieved the then-mentioned target zone of ₹88,500-₹89,500.

Similar to the trend in the global markets, the domestic gold prices too have taken a hit in the last couple of days and this weakness is likely to persist in the near-term. A fall to ₹84,500-₹85,000 range appears likely in the short-term.

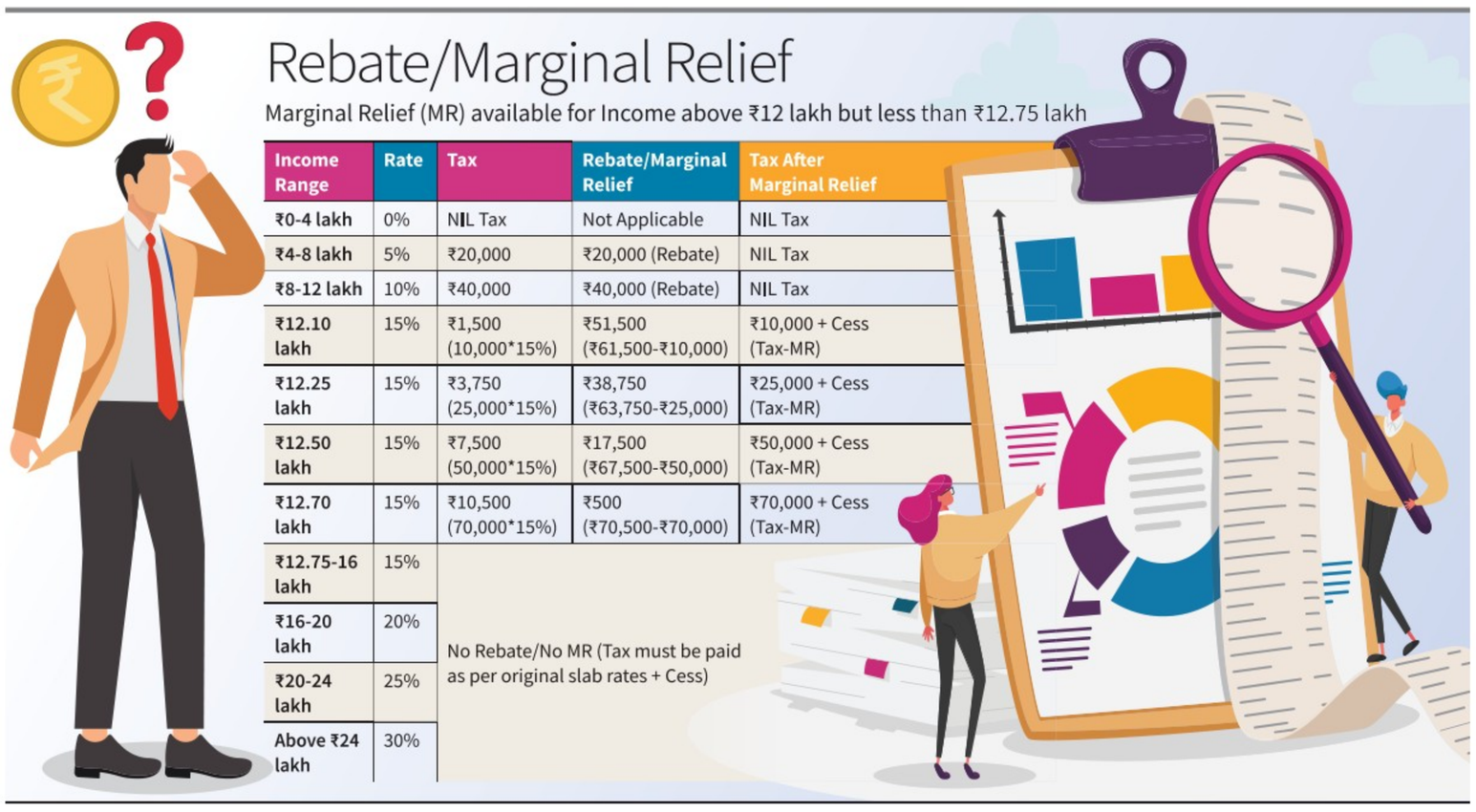
The short-term outlook for MCX silver too is not positive. The price could drop to the immediate support ₹80,200-₹80,700. Only a move above ₹1,05,000 would trigger further upside momentum.

To summarise, precious metal prices are cooling off from the recent extended run up.

This cool off is likely to persist in the near-term. The long-term trend however remains positive.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. The views and opinion featured in this column is based on the analysis of short-term price movement in gold and silver futures at COMEX & Multi Commodity Exchange of India. This is not meant to be a trading or investment advice.)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.


Rebate/Marginal Relief
Marginal Relief (MR) available for Income above ₹12 lakh but less than ₹12.75 lakh
No Rebate/No MR (Tax must be paid as per original slab rates + Cess)

Income Range	Rate	Tax	Rebate/Marginal Relief	Tax After Marginal Relief
₹0-4 lakh	0%	NIL Tax	Not Applicable	NIL Tax
₹4-8 lakh	5%	₹20,000	₹20,000 (Rebate)	NIL Tax
₹8-12 lakh	10%	₹40,000	₹40,000 (Rebate)	NIL Tax
₹12.10 lakh	15%	₹1,500 (10,000*15%)	₹51,500 (₹61,500-₹10,000)	₹10,000 + Cess (Tax-MR)
₹12.25 lakh	15%	₹3,750 (25,000*15%)	₹38,750 (₹63,750-₹25,000)	₹25,000 + Cess (Tax-MR)
₹12.50 lakh	15%	₹7,500 (50,000*15%)	₹17,500 (₹67,500-₹50,000)	₹50,000 + Cess (Tax-MR)
₹12.70 lakh	15%	₹10,500 (70,000*15%)	₹500 (₹70,500-₹70,000)	₹70,000 + Cess (Tax-MR)
₹12.75-16 lakh	15%			
₹16-20 lakh	20%			
₹20-24 lakh	25%			
Above ₹24 lakh	30%			

No tax on up to ₹12 lakh income but why slabs?

As per Union Budget 2025, there will be no I-T on income up to ₹12 lakh a year under New Tax Regime; so, what do the slabs with an interval of ₹4 lakh in each income range category convey?

DECODING I-T

Vaishali R. Venkat

On February 1, 2025, in her 74-minute Union Budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said there will be no tax on income up to ₹12,00,000 per annum, under the New Tax Regime (NTR).

Factoring in Standard Deduction of ₹75,000, this limit would be extended to ₹12,75,000 per annum for salaried taxpayers.

On top of it, Ms. Sitharaman also rejigged the slabs in equal intervals of ₹4 lakh between each slab. The slabs are ₹0-4 lakh (Nil), ₹4-8 lakh (Tax 5% – ₹20,000), ₹8-12 lakh (10% – ₹40,000), ₹12-16 lakh (15%), ₹16-20 lakh (20%), ₹20-24 lakh (25%) and above ₹24 lakh (30%). So, if income is ₹12.10 lakh, tax will be (₹60,000+₹1,500 viz. 15% of ₹10,000).

> Additionally, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced a fresh 25% tax rate category, which was not available in the previous financial year

New tax rate category

Additionally, she introduced a fresh 25% tax rate category, which was not available in the previous financial year.

As per previous year slabs, after 20% category the next category was 30%.

Now, this extended tax limit benefit is available only for those who choose the NTR. Whether to choose Old Tax Regime or New Tax Regime is purely a matter of choice and goal, which we covered earlier in our Moneywise column dated February 17.

Coming back to NTR slabs. It would be quite natural to ask if no tax is levied up to an income of ₹12,00,000 why only the slab ₹0-4 lakh shows NIL tax. Further, for income from ₹4-12 lakh, there is a corresponding tax rate of 5% to 10% in the respective columns. The question arising here is do you need to pay 5% tax (₹4-8 lakh category) if your salary is, say ₹5.5 lakh per annum!

Nay. For clarity's sake, let's for some time, keep aside the component of Standard Deduction and consider the slabs alone.

Two components

Going by her Budget announcement, ideally, the first slab and the corresponding income tax rate should have been straight ₹0-12 lakh - NIL, but it's not and there are other slabs in between, with specific rates. This is because, the calculation of income tax always takes into account two components to derive the final taxable income.

The first component is the simple straight-forward component of Standard Deduction (₹75,000 under NTR), which would shrink the total tax payable amount directly. Next, a slightly complicated component known as rebate, which falls under Section 87A of the Income Tax Act.

> You can claim the 'marginal relief' if your taxable income is more than ₹12 lakh but lower than ₹12.75 lakh according to a CBDT circular

You cannot deduct the rebate amount directly from the taxable income as in the case of Standard Deduction. Rebate acts like a discount, provided, your total income satisfies certain criterion.

A 'discount' (Rebate) of ₹60,000 is applicable to taxpayers only if the total taxable income is within the stipulated limit of ₹12,00,000. In Budget 2025, the Finance Minister also raised rebate amount from ₹25,000 to ₹60,000, but only for NTR.

In short, if your taxable income is within ₹12,00,000, your tax amount would be ₹60,000 (₹20,000 plus ₹40,000). However, as your income is within the threshold of ₹12,00,000, you can claim the Rebate (discount) of ₹60,000, bringing your net taxable amount to zero [₹60,000 tax minus ₹60,000 Rebate].

So, what if your taxable income crosses the threshold of ₹12,00,000? You cannot claim the Rebate, thereby paying higher tax amount. Suppose let's say you earn ₹12,10,000 in a year. As the no-tax limit is exceeded by ₹10,000, Rebate is not applicable. For earning ₹10,000 more per annum, you end up paying ₹61,500 (₹20,000 + ₹40,000 + ₹1,500).

But a clarification by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) addresses the anomaly by way of providing 'marginal relief.' You can claim the 'marginal relief' if your taxable income is more than ₹12 lakh but less than ₹12.75 lakh.

In the above example, total tax payable is ₹61,500 without 'marginal relief' but with marginal relief, it would be much lower. To calculate marginal relief, deduct the excess amount over no-tax limit (₹10,000) from total tax payable of ₹61,500. Thus, marginal relief would be ₹51,500 and so, the final tax payout would only be ₹10,000 (₹61,500 minus ₹51,500 of marginal relief).

Exceeding limit

What if taxable income exceeds ₹12.75 lakh? Unfortunately, you cannot avail both Rebate and benefit of marginal relief, thus paying more tax. However, if your employer contributes to National Pension Scheme, you can claim the contribution amount under Section 80CCD(2), up to 14% of your basic salary, thus reducing the tax burden. Your contribution to the scheme would not be taken into account.

(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified wealth manager)

Past imperfect, future uncertain

THINKINVESTOR

It will be optimal to take investment decisions based on information now available and not on past outcomes; be mindful that both skill and luck are important for investment success

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

We are creatures of habit. So, we typically look at outcomes of our past investment decisions to make investment choices today that will help us achieve life goals in the future. Here, we discuss why taking current investment decisions based on past experiences may not be optimal.

Process? Outcomes?

Investment outcomes are uncertain. A good decision can lead to a bad outcome and bad decision can lead to a good outcome. You may argue that outcome is all that matters. After all, if you are investing to accumulate wealth to buy a house, the success of your decision depends on whether you buy the house or not.

If a decision in the past turned out to be a good outcome, you may be tempted to make the same choice now. That may not lead to the same outcome in the future. Take gold. Suppose you invested in sovereign gold bond (SGB) in 2023 because you believed gold is always a good investment. Sure, your investment would have gained significantly. There are two factors to consider, though.

One, what if gold price declines the week before maturity of the SGBs? This is important because redemption value is based on the average price of gold on the last three days before the maturity date. Your investments would have gained but did you even consider investment in gold ETF? And two, did you consider the (political) factors that led to gold prices moving up recently? What if some other commodity catches the market's fancy in the future? It would be, perhaps, optimal if you consider these factors before deciding to continue investing in gold based on returns experience.

Conclusion

The past decisions may not always work in the future for reasons such as change in income-tax regulations, continually changing market dynamics and political situation. So, do not feel compelled to take the same decisions today that resulted in positive outcomes in the past. Also, do not assume a decision that did not work in the past will not work in the future. It is tempting to attribute positive outcomes to skill and negative outcomes to bad luck. Yet, it will be optimal to take investment decisions based on the information currently available and not on past outcomes. Be mindful that both skill and luck are important for investment success.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.25	7.50	7.25
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.10	8.00	7.25
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.38	6.00	6.75	6.25
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.20
NorthEast Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.00	9.00	8.00
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.60	8.25	8.25	8.60
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.10	7.20	7.20
Unity Small Finance Bank	8.60	7.25	8.15	8.15
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.75
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.25	6.70	7.10	7.00
Bandhan Bank	8.05	8.05	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.25
CSB Bank	8.00	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.50
DCB Bank	8.00	7.10	7.50	7.40
Federal Bank	7.50	7.00	7.10	7.10
HDFC Bank	7.25	6.60	7.00	7.00
ICICI Bank	7.25	6.70	7.00	7.00
IDFC FIRST Bank	7.90	6.50	6.80	6.75
IndusInd Bank	7.75	7.75	7.25	7.25
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.30	7.00	6.75	6.50
Karur Vysya Bank	7.60	7.00	7.00	7.00
Karnataka Bank	7.50	7.25	6.50	6.50
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.40	7.10	7.00	6.20
RBL Bank	8.00	7.50	7.50	7.10
SBM Bank India	8.25	7.05	7.30	7.75
South Indian Bank	7.40	6.80	6.70	6.00
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.60	7.00	6.50	6.50
YES Bank	7.75	7.75	7.25	7.25
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.30	6.85	7.15	6.80
Bank of India	7.30	6.80	6.50	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	7.45	6.75	6.50	6.50
Canara Bank	7.40	6.85	7.40	6.70
Central Bank of India	7.50	6.85	7.00	6.75
Indian Bank	7.30	6.10	6.25	6.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.30	7.10	6.50	6.50
Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.80	7.00	6.50
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.25	6.30	6.00	6.50
State Bank of India	7.00	6.80	6.75	6.50
Union Bank of India	7.30	6.80	6.70	6.50

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
			(In %)
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	8.25-9.40	8.25-9.40	8.25-9.40
Bank of Baroda	8.40-10.40	8.40-10.40	8.40-10.65
Union Bank of India*	8.10-10.50	8.10-10.65	8.10-10.65
Punjab National Bank	8.20-10.00	8.15-9.90	8.15-9.90
Bank of India	8.15-10.60	8.15-10.60	8.15-10.85
Bank of Maharashtra	8.10-10.90	8.10-10.90	8.10-10.90
Indian Overseas Bank	8.15-10.75	8.15-10.75	8.15-10.75
Indian Bank	8.15-9.55	8.15-9.55	8.15-9.55
Central Bank of India	8.10-9.70	8.10-9.70	8.10-9.70
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.65 #	8.65 #	8.65 #
ICICI Bank	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
Axis Bank	8.75-12.80	8.75-12.80	8.75-9.65
HSBC Bank	8.40 #	8.40 #	8.40 #
South Indian Bank	8.50 #	8.50 #	8.50 #
Karur Vysya Bank	8.75-11.65	8.75-11.65	8.75-11.65
Karnataka Bank	8.94-11.06	8.94-11.06	8.94-9.59
Federal Bank	8.80 #	8.80 #	8.80 #
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.60-9.80	8.60-9.80	8.60-9.80
Bandhan Bank	8.91-15.00	8.91-13.08	8.91-13.08
RBL Bank	9.00 #	9.00 #	9.00 #
CSB Bank	10.24-12.09	10.24-12.09	10.24-12.09
HDFC Bank Ltd.	8.70 #	8.70 #	8.70 #
City Union Bank	10.35-15.75	10.15-15.75	10.15-14.05
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.25 #	8.25 #	8.25 #
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.25 #	8.25 #	8.25 #
Tata Capital	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
GIC Housing Finance	8.80 #	8.80 #	8.80 #
SMFG India Home Finance	10.00 #	10.00 #	10.00 #
Sammaan Capital	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
Aditya Birla Capital	8.60 #	8.60 #	8.60 #
ICICI Home Finance	9.30 #	9.30 #	9.30 #
Godrej Housing Finance	8.55 #	8.55 #	8.55 #

***Extra interest rate concession of 0.05% to borrowers opting for insurance policy and extra 0.10% on green home projects.**

#Onwards

Rates as on April 2
Source:Paisabazaar.com

KINSHASA

Torrential rain kills around 30 people in DR Congo's capital

AFP

Heavy downpours in the Democratic Republic of Congo's capital Kinshasa have killed around 30 people while wreaking havoc across the central African megacity. After the rain poured down overnight from Friday to Saturday, rising waters devastated impoverished suburbs of the metropolis of some 17 million people. AFP

SAO PAULO

Bolsonaro to lead Sao Paulo protest as he faces coup charges

AP

Brazil's former President Jair Bolsonaro plans to lead a demonstration in Sao Paulo on Sunday, the first since the Supreme Court decided to try him on charges of plotting a coup. The far-right leader will headline a rally demanding amnesty for those convicted of an attack in Brasilia on January 8, 2023. AFP

TEHRAN

Iran top diplomat rejects Trump's demand for direct nuclear talks

AFP

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi dismissed direct talks with the U.S. as pointless, after U.S. President Donald Trump said he preferred face-to-face talks over its nuclear programme. He said direct talks made no sense with a country "that constantly threatens to resort to force in violation of the UN Charter". AFP

LONDON

Britain says Israel's detention of two U.K. MPs 'unacceptable'

AP

Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy said on Saturday it was "unacceptable" that Israel had detained two U.K. MPs and denied them entry. Yuan Yang and Abtisam Mohamed, from the governing Labour Party, flew from London to Israel but were blocked from entering the country and deported, British media reported. AFP

Le Pen calls her conviction 'political decision', vows not to give up fight

The far right party mounts a show of force after Le Pen was found guilty of embezzling European Parliament funds, barring her from contesting for public office; left-wing forces and centrist camp staged counter gatherings against the far right

Agence France-Paris
PARIS

France's far-right leader Marine Le Pen on Sunday vowed not to give up after she was found guilty of embezzlement and banned from taking part in elections, slamming her conviction as a "political decision".

The bombshell judgement, which could crush Ms. Le Pen's dream of winning the French presidency in 2027, has stunned the country's political establishment.

"I won't give up," Ms. Le Pen told members of her National Rally party and supporters, who packed the Place Vauban. She denounced a "witch hunt" against her party.

Show of strength: Marine Le Pen delivers a speech at a meeting of her National Rally party in Paris on Sunday. AFP

Jordan Bardella, Ms. Le Pen's top lieutenant and head of the National Rally party, told the rally that the court ruling was aimed at "eliminating her from the presidential race".

The far right sought to mount a show of force after Ms. Le Pen, 56, was found guilty Monday of embezzling European Parliament funds and given a partly suspended jail term and an immediate ban on holding public office.

Her supporters branded the ruling politically motivated, but President Emmanuel Macron insisted the French judiciary is "independent". The judges who convicted Ms. Le Pen have received threats.

Some leftwing forces and the centrist camp staged counter gatherings on Sunday against the far right.

At a meeting of Mr. Macron's Renaissance party in the northern working-class Paris suburb of Saint-Denis, former prime minister Gabriel Attal accused the far right of "attacking our judges, attacking our institutions".

"You steal, you pay," Mr. Attal said in a speech later in the day.

Some left-wingers including members of the hard-left France Unbowed (LFI) party staged a counter rally at the Place de la Republique. According to a police source, around 3,000 people attended.

'Trump tariffs will disrupt the global trading system, and collapse economies'

U.S. moves are pushing the world towards a multipolar order, in which India-China ties will play a key role: ex-Foreign Minister of South Korea

INTERVIEW

Kyung-wha Kang

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs, which go into effect this week, could have a "devastating impact" on global trade, and even lead to the collapse of some national economies, warns Asia Society president and CEO Kyung-wha Kang. In this interview to *The Hindu* during a recent visit to India, Ms. Kang, who was South Korea's first female Foreign Minister (2017-2021), and previously held a number of senior positions in the UN, says the U.S.'s economic and geopolitical moves are disrupting the global order. Excerpts:

What will be the impact of U.S. President Donald Trump's "reciprocal tariffs"?

If the reciprocal tariffs are implemented as is expected, I think they will have a dampening effect on global trade. You could reach a level in different trade zones where the trade itself completely collapses, and that means certain national economies could collapse.

For countries like South Korea, where we have no natural resources, our economy is completely dependent upon export-driven growth. So hopefully there is room [for] exceptions or for discussions. If not, it will be devastating, and will almost stop the global trading system as we know it.

Could China gain from this move ?

Well, I think everybody loses in this, at first impact. But China is a big economy and China has been, for many years, looking at what is coming out of the United States, and tried to build its own domestic capacity. It has also tried to prepare itself for decoupling by increasing self-sufficiency. Of course, currently the Chinese economy is not doing all that well: consumer confidence dropped during the COVID lockdowns and never picked up again, the property market has crashed, even though innovation – companies like Deepseek (AI) and Huawei (Technology and EVs) have survived and excelled against all odds.

What does this mean for U.S. policy towards Taiwan, towards the protection of the Taiwan Straits in the event of conflict with China?

The sense is that President Trump himself is more of a deal maker than a warmonger, and therefore all the pressure that he's putting on China, it would seem, is aimed at some kind of a big deal with China.

This has been hailed as the Asian Century. Twenty-five years into it, what is your prediction for the rest of it?

This is still a century of Asia's rise, of global affairs moving surely but gradually towards Asia. But that process has been a quite a disruptive one, and when existing orders are changing, there is a disruptive element to that.

The world is at a turning point, entering a new kind of a geopolitical order that is much more multipolar. The bilateral relationship between China and India will have a particularly definitive part to play in the century going forward.

At least 24 killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza Strip

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip killed at least 24 people, including over a dozen women and children, local health officials said on Sunday, as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu headed to the U.S. to meet with President Donald Trump about the war.

One of the Israeli strikes overnight into Sunday hit a tent and a house in the southern city of Khan Younis, killing five men, five women and five children.

A female journalist was also among those killed.

Tens of thousands take out protests in U.S. cities against Trump's divisive policies

Reuters
WASHINGTON

Tens of thousands of protesters flooded the streets of major U.S. cities on Saturday to oppose the divisive policies of President Donald Trump, in the largest demonstrations since his return to the White House.

Opponents of the Republican President's policies – from government staffing cuts to trade tariffs and eroding civil liberties – rallied in Washington, New York, Houston, Florida, Colorado and Los Angeles, among other locations.

In Washington, thousands of demonstrators – many travelling from across the United States – gathered on the National Mall where dozens of speakers rallied opposition to Mr. Trump.

A dog at a 'Hands Off!' protest organised against Donald Trump and Elon Musk in Los Angeles in California on Saturday. GETTY IMAGES

The rallies even extended to some European capitals, where demonstrators voiced opposition to Mr. Trump and his aggressive trade policies.

"What's happening in America is everyone's problem," Liz Chamberlin, a dual U.S.-British citizen said at a London rally.

"It's economic lunacy... He is going to push us into a global recession."

Protest in Berlin

And in Berlin, 70-year-old retiree Susanne Fest said Mr. Trump had created "a constitutional crisis," adding, "The guy is a lunatic."

In the U.S., a loose coalition of left-leaning groups like MoveOn and Women's March organised "Hands Off" events in more than 1,000 cities and in every congressional district against the U.S. President and advisor Elon Musk.

Sport

Verstappen's reign at Suzuka continues

FORMULA ONE

Reuters
SUZUKA

World champion Max Verstappen claimed a pole to flag victory for Red Bull at the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday, winning his first race of the season and an unprecedented fourth in a row at Suzuka.

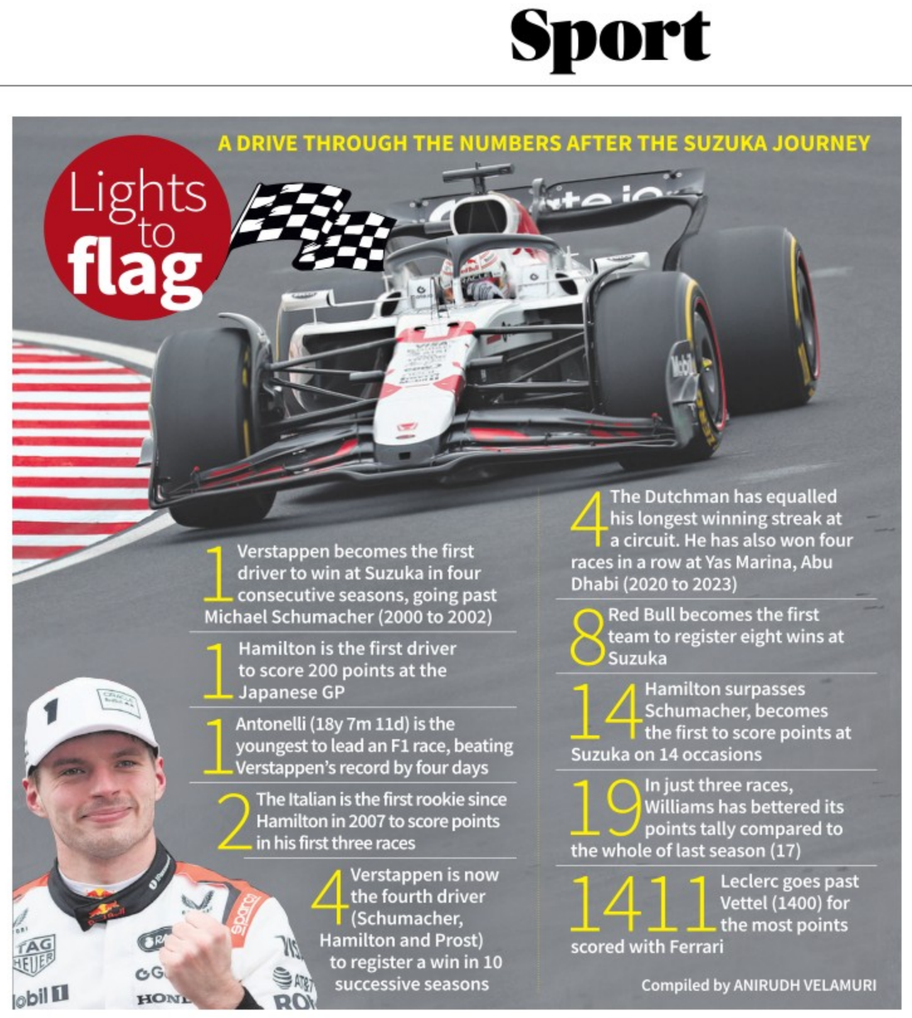
Lando Norris finished second but saw his lead over Verstappen in the championship slashed to one point, while his McLaren teammate Oscar Piastri rounded out the podium in third place on his 24th birthday.

The results: 1. Max Verstappen (Red Bull) 1hr 22min 6.983sec, 2. Lando Norris (McLaren) +1.423s, 3. Oscar Piastri (McLaren) +2.129, 4. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) +6.097, 5. George Russell (Mercedes) +17.362, 6. Kimi Antonelli (Mercedes) +18.671, 7. Lewis Hamilton (Ferrari) +29.182, 8. Isack Hadjar (RB) +37.134, 9. Alexander Albon (Williams) +40.367.

10. Oliver Bearman (Haas) +54.529, 11. Fernando Alonso (Aston Martin) +57.333, 12. Yuki Tsunoda (Red Bull) +58.401, 13. Pierre Gasly (Alpine) + 1:02.122, 14. Carlos Sainz (Williams) +1:14.129.

15. Jack Doohan (Alpine) +1:21.314, 16. Nico Hulkenberg (Sauber) +1:21.957, 17. Liam Lawson (RB) +1:22.734, 18. Esteban Ocon (Haas) +1:23.438, 19. Gabriel Bortoleto (Sauber) +1:23.897, 20. Lance Stroll (Can/Aston Martin) + 1 lap.

The standings (top five):
Drivers: 1. Norris 62 pts., 2. Verstappen (Ned) 61, 3. Piastri 49, 4. Russell 45, 5. Antonelli 30.
Constructors: 1. McLaren 111 pts., 2. Mercedes 75, 3. Red Bull 61, 4. Ferrari 35, 5. Williams 19.


A DRIVE THROUGH THE NUMBERS AFTER THE SUZUKA JOURNEY
Lights to flag
1 Verstappen becomes the first driver to win at Suzuka in four consecutive seasons, going past Michael Schumacher (2000 to 2002)
1 Hamilton is the first driver to score 200 points at the Japanese GP
1 Antonelli (18y 7m 11d) is the youngest to lead an F1 race, beating Verstappen's record by four days
2 The Italian is the first rookie since Hamilton in 2007 to score points in his first three races
4 Verstappen is now the fourth driver (Schumacher, Hamilton and Prost) to register a win in 10 successive seasons
4 The Dutchman has equalled his longest winning streak at a circuit. He has also won four races in a row at Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi (2020 to 2023)
8 Red Bull becomes the first team to register eight wins at Suzuka
14 Hamilton surpasses Schumacher, becomes the first to score points at Suzuka on 14 occasions
19 In just three races, Williams has bettered its points tally compared to the whole of last season (17)
1411 Leclerc goes past Vettel (1400) for the most points scored with Ferrari
Compiled by ANIRUDH VELAMURI

Fulham edges leader Liverpool

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Liverpool slumped to just its second Premier League defeat this season as Fulham clinched a shock 3-2 win, while Southampton was relegated in record-setting time after a 3-1 loss at Tottenham on Sunday.

Later, Manchester City's hopes of Champions League qualification remain in the balance after a dismal derby at Manchester United ended 0-0 on Sunday.

Barcelona failed to break down a frantic Real Betis defence as it was held to a 1-1 draw in LaLiga on Saturday while Real Madrid fell further behind after loging 2-1 in stoppage time at home to Valencia.

Opportunistic: Sessegnon, second right, steals in behind Van Dijk to score Fulham's opener. AP

The results: Premier League: Brentford 0 drew with Chelsea 0; Fulham 3 (Sessegnon 23, Iwobi 32, Muniz 37) bt Liverpool 2 (Mac Allister 14, Diaz 72); Tottenham 3 (Johnson 13, 42, Tel 90+6-pen) bt Southampton 1 (Fernandes 90); Manchester United 0 drew with Manchester City 0.
LaLiga: Las Palmas 1 (McBurnie 60) lost to Real Sociedad 3 (Oyarzabal 5, Gomez 56, Aramburu 68); Sevilla 1 (Agoume 7) lost to Atletico Madrid 2 (Alvarez 25-pen, Barrios 90+3).
Serie A: Atalanta 0 lost to Lazio 1 (Isaksen 54).
On Saturday: Premier League: Aston Villa 2 (Rogers 13, Malen 15) bt Nottingham Forest 1 (Jota 57).
LaLiga: Real Madrid 1 (Vinicius 50) lost to Valencia 2 (Diakhaby 15, Duro 90+5); Barcelona 1 (Gavi 7) drew with Real Betis 1 (Natan 17).
Serie A: AC Milan 2 (Abraham 23, Jovic 64) drew with Fiorentina 2 (Thiaw 7-og, Kean 10); Parma 2 (Bernabe 60, Ondrejka 69) drew with Inter Milan 2 (Darmian 15, Thuram 45).
Bundesliga: Werder Bremen 2 (Burke 28, Schmid 84) bt Eintracht Frankfurt 0.

HIGH PRAISE

'Siraj's assessment of conditions, his execution were exceptional'

K.V.S. GIRI

SRH head coach Daniel Vettori lauded Mohammed Siraj's impact in the defeat to GT. "He bowled incredibly well, summed up conditions perfectly, understood that he had to hit the stumps the whole time. Any time you take four for 17, it puts your team on the front foot. His assessment of conditions and his execution were exceptional".

KEEPING IT SIMPLE

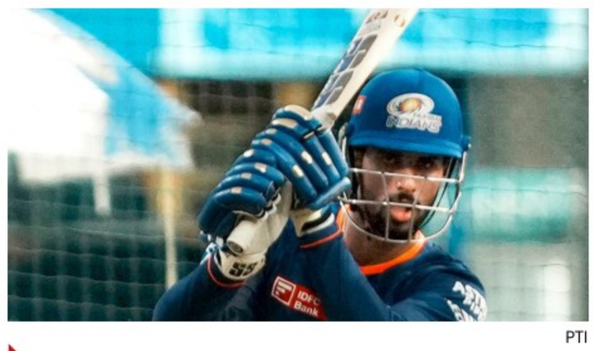
'We have a bowling unit where any of us can bowl at any stage'

K.V.S. GIRI

Our discussions were pretty simple. We have a bowling unit where any of us can bowl at any stage. Given the skill levels all of us have, we should be able to do all the roles pretty well. We know exactly what plans we come in with and that's really helping us — GT's Prasidh Krishna.

MATCH-WINNER

Jayawardene throws his weight behind under-fire Tilak



PTI

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene has put his weight behind Tilak Varma, who was retired out with seven balls remaining in its futile chase against Lucknow Super Giants. "I am sure he'll walk in here tomorrow and he will win the match for us. There is a lot of value for him in our camp."

FIRMLY IN THE SADDLE

Samson achieves most number of wins as RR captain in IPL

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Sanju Samson eclipsed the late Shane Warne to become the captain with the most wins for Rajasthan Royals in the IPL. Samson accomplished the milestone during his side's win over Punjab Kings on Saturday. This was Samson's 32nd win as RR captain from 62 games as compared to Warne's 31 victories in 55 matches.

Siraj and Gill star as Titans drub Sunrisers

The pacer comes up with a career-best bowling show to restrict the host to 152; the visiting team's skipper guides his side home with a composed, unbeaten 61

Central figures: Siraj struck both up front and at the death to contain Sunrisers to a modest total, while Gill ensured Titans won at a canter. K.V.S. GIRI

IPL-18

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

The diminishing aura around Sunrisers Hyderabad's batting line-up was brought to the fore, this time by Gujarat Titans in a seven-wicket drubbing in an IPL clash at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium here on Sunday.

Asked to bat first, SRH – once the IPL's 'unstoppable force' – was halted at 152 for eight by a Titans attack led by local boy Mohammed Siraj, before Shubman Gill marshalled his troops in a fairly straightforward chase.

Siraj, who returned his career-best figures in the IPL, hit SRH where it hurt most, removing Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma in the PowerPlay. The second wicket also handed the pacer his 100th scalp in the tournament. Prasidh Krishna, who has been stingy thus far this season, snuffed out Ishan Kishan in the eighth over to leave SRH in big trouble.

The biggest indicator of Sunrisers' crawl against Titans was the fact that it took the side 76 balls to bring up the first six of the innings, the first time since April 2023 that the franchise had not scored a maximum in the first 10 overs.

GT did not allow an edgy SRH to fluently find the fence. Desperate attempts from Heinrich Klaasen, Aniket Verma and Pat Cummins could only take SRH to a total well under par, given its own lofty standards.

With the much-lambasted SRH bowling arsenal in the hot seat, Cummins and Mohammad Shami started strong. The latter sent back the in-form Sai Sudarshan and the former got the explosive Jos Buttler to nick a length delivery to Klaasen to get the crowd roaring.

Washington impresses

Washington Sundar, on his Titans debut, kept the pressure on SRH by taking Simarjeet Singh to the cleaners, smashing two fours and as many sixes, including an eye-catching flick that saw the ball sail over fine-leg.

Gill eased himself in, bringing up his half-century to push forward GT's pursuit. A moment of magic from fielder Aniket to dismiss an on-song Washington perked up the hopes of everyone wearing an orange shirt.

Sunrisers' joy, however, was short-lived, as Sherfane Rutherford, in Gill's company, piloted GT home with 20 balls to spare.

Next assignment

GT: April 9 vs **RR**
Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m

SRH: April 12 vs **PBKS**
Hyderabad, 7.30 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

Abhishek Sharma c Tewatia b Siraj 18 (*16b, 4x4*), Travis Head c Sai Sudharsan b Siraj 8 (*5b, 2x4*), Ishan Kishan c Ishant b Prasidh 17 (*14b, 2x4*), Nitish Kumar c Rashid b Sai Kishore 31 (*34b, 3x4*), Heinrich Klaasen b Sai Kishore 27 (*19b, 2x4, 1x6*), Aniket Verma lbw b Siraj 18 (*14b, 2x4*), Kamindu Mendis c Sai Sudharsan b Prasidh 1 (*5b*), Pat Cummins (not out) 22 (*9b, 3x4, 1x6*), Simarjeet Singh **(Impact player for Head)** b Siraj 0 (*2b*), Mohammed Shami (not out) 6 (*2b, 1x4*); Extras (lb-2, w-2) 4; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 152.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-9 (Head, 0.6 overs), 2-38 (Abhishek, 4.4), 3-50 (Ishan, 7.2), 4-100 (Klaasen, 13.5), 5-105 (Nitish, 15.1), 6-120 (Kamindu, 16.6), 7-135 (Aniket, 18.4), 8-135 (Simarjeet, 18.6).

TITANS BOWLING

Siraj 4-0-17-4, Ishant 4-0-53-0, Prasidh 4-0-25-2, Rashid 4-0-31-0, Sai Kishore 4-0-24-2.

GUJARAT TITANS

B. Sai Sudharsan c Aniket b Shami 5 (*9b*), Shubman Gill (not out) 61 (*43b, 9x4*), Jos Buttler c Klaasen b Cummins 0 (*3b*), Washington Sundar c Aniket b Shami 49 (*29b, 5x4, 2x6*), Sherfane Rutherford **(Impact player for Ishant)** (not out) 35 (*16b, 6x4, 1x6*); Extras (w-3): 3; Total (for three wkts. in 16.4 overs): 153.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-15 (Sai Sudharsan, 2.5), 2-16 (Buttler, 3.5), 3-106 (Washington, 13.1).

SUNRISERS BOWLING

Shami 4-0-28-2, Cummins 3.4-0-26-1, Simarjeet 1-0-20-0, Unadkat 2-0-16-0, Zeeshan 4-0-33-0, Kamindu 1-0-12-0, Abhishek 1-0-18-0.

Toss: Titans; **PoM:** Siraj.

Titans won by seven wickets with 20 balls to spare.

Points table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Delhi Capitals	3	3	0	6	1.257
Gujarat Titans	4	3	1	6	1.031
Royal Challengers	3	2	1	4	1.149
Punjab Kings	3	2	1	4	0.074
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	2	2	4	0.070
Lucknow Super Giants	4	2	2	4	0.048
Rajasthan Royals	4	2	2	4	-0.185
Mumbai Indians	4	1	3	2	0.108
Chennai Super Kings	4	1	3	2	-0.891
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	1	4	2	-1.629

** Till the SRH-GT match on April 6*

Rohit likely to play, says Jayawardene

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene confirmed that Jasprit Bumrah is available while Rohit Sharma is likely to play in Monday's face-off against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

"He (Bumrah) is available. He trained, so he should be available tomorrow," Jayawardene said at the Wankhede Stadium. "He arrived last night and I believe he had his sessions with NCA to finalise that. He has been handed over to our physios. He is bowling today, all (is) good and will play tomorrow (Monday)."

Bumrah bowled for well over 30 minutes at the start of MI's nets, with designated openers Rohit Sharma and Ryan Rickelton facing him. After taking an hour's break, Bumrah returned for another stint, with Mitchell Santner and Corbin Bosch at the crease.

Rohit missed MI's last game in Lucknow on Friday after being hit on the knee while training. The veteran looked in no discomfort while batting. "Ro looks good. It was just an unfortunate impact on his leg while batting, it was not comfortable. We were travelling yesterday. We will do an assessment on that," Jayawardene added.

MI receives Bumrah boost ahead of marquee clash against Royal Challengers

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Be it in the Men in Blue or those in golden blue, Jasprit Bumrah has been the saviour for most of the last decade. No wonder then that with him having been sidelined from the first fortnight of the Indian Premier League (IPL), Mumbai Indians is far from having set the stage alight in IPL 2025.

Naturally, when he joined the squad on Saturday, MI received a big morale boost. When he ran in – albeit not in full steam – and asked a few questions to the batters ahead of Monday's marquee clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, the MI camp saw multiple faces light up despite mediocre results so far.

Big threat: Bumrah's return will add teeth to the MI attack. PTI

Today's match

MUMBAI INDIANS vs RCB

Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: **33**

MI **19** | RCB **14**

PREVIOUS MEETING

MI won by seven wickets, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

Aura

Such has been his aura that Bumrah's availability for the crucial game – confirmed by head coach Mahela Jayawardene – will definitely lend balance to the MI line-up. With Bumrah missing in action and Rohit Sharma – who had a long stint in the bat – missing out on its previous loss in Lucknow after being hit on his knee in the nets, MI has had little to celebrate so far. But the five-time champion will bank on Bumrah to showcase his class and restrict an outfit that started its campaign on song. Having overcome Kolkata Knight Riders and Chennai Super Kings before suffering a setback against Gujarat Titans, RCB will be keen on registering a hat-trick of wins against three of the most successful IPL franchises.

Key men

Virat Kohli and Phil Salt will be hoping to counter the pace and swing of Trent Boult and Bumrah. With the red-soil surface aiding the MI pace pack in its previous home game, RCB's Josh Hazlewood will be looking forward to spitting venom against Rohit and Co.

Having suffered three losses in four outings so far, time is running out for MI. Can Bumrah give it a breath of fresh air?

Archer bounces back with clutch bowling

Sankar Narayanan E.H.
NEW CHANDIGARH

Jofra Archer's quiver must be full of self-conviction.

After a terrible start to IPL 2025, the Rajasthan Royals speedster has bounced back with two clutch performances.

The pacer's spell against Sunrisers Hyderabad (4-0-76-0) was the costliest in the tournament's history and the next outing against Kolkata Knight Riders, too, was underwhelming (2.3-0-33-0).

Archer flipped the narrative against Chennai Super Kings (3-1-13-1) and Punjab Kings (4-0-25-3).

Even though his wicket-maiden first over against CSK was impressive, what took the cake was how he rattled Priyansh Arya and Shreyas Iyer's stumps to derail PBKS' 206-run chase early.

And he banked on his biggest strength – bowl fast and make the batters look clueless – when the going got tough.

While Priyansh had no answer to a 144.6kph-delivery that seamed off the pitch to hit the top of off-stump, Shreyas played all over a 148.6kph-thunderbolt.

"The beginning of the tournament did happen...

Archer. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

you have to cash in on days like these and take the bad ones in your stride," Archer said on Saturday.

"We all know Jofra is a world-class bowler. The skill he brings to the table is totally different. The management knew that the day he got that one wicket, his confidence would be high. After that, obviously, he is one of the toughest bowlers to face. I am sure, with more games, he is going to get better and better," Sandeep Sharma said after RR's 50-run win at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh Stadium.

"You go back and see what you have been doing differently [when you go for runs]. That is what he did. That is what champion players do. Whatever is needed, they do it quickly," Sandeep added.

Time running out for Chennai Super Kings

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

After three straight defeats – the latest coming against Delhi Capitals at home on Saturday – Chennai Super Kings' morale has hit rock bottom.

More than the losses, it is how the five-time champion meekly surrendered in all three chases without ever looking to threaten the target that has caused heartburn for its fans.

The reverse against Capitals exposed the shortcomings of the batting unit. CSK has the worst scoring rate in the PowerPlay in IPL-18, managing just 7.4 runs per over. In an unfortunate coincidence, almost all of Ruturaj Gaikwad's men look out of form and clueless.

At the same time, the Chennai outfit has not been able to hide its limitations – for instance Shivam Dube's vulnerability against pace and M.S. Dhoni's susceptibility against spin – leaving too many gaping holes for the opponents to exploit.

The inability to address all this at the auction by not going for an explosive overseas option, who can bat in the middle-order and anchor the innings, is proving costly. None of the batters, barring the skipper, has looked convincing though the team has already tried 17 players, including all its foreign signings.

Testing times: Ruturaj has found the going tough, especially as a leader. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Baffling

At the auction table, CSK went big for spinners. It's, however, baffling that Ruturaj is not confident of using his three-pronged spin attack for the full 12 overs. By going for six bowlers and under-utilising one of them, the batting depth has also been compromised.

If this wasn't enough, the talk around Dhoni's retirement – it hit fever pitch ahead of the match against the Capitals and was fuelled by the rare presence of his parents and extended family at the MAC Stadium – did not help matters.

The franchise still believes in the former skipper's value, on and off the field. While Dhoni is not the problem, he is not the solution either. At a time when Super Kings needs a finisher, he doesn't fit the bill considering he can't bat for long. An honest appraisal, individually and collectively, needs to happen, and quickly.

INBRIEF

Hitesh wins 70kg title in World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025

Hitesh won the 70kg gold medal after England's Odel Kamara did not fight in the final due to an injury, at the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025 in Foz do Iguacu. Abhinash Jamwal, the other Indian to reach the final, was beaten 5-0 by local favourite Yuri Reis in the 65kg title clash. M. Jadumani Singh (50kg), Manish Rathore (55kg), Sachin (60kg) and Vishal (90kg) bagged bronze as India finished with six medals.

Ju draws level in World Championship match

Defending champion Ju Wenjun of China ground out a win in a pawn-up endgame to defeat compatriot Tan Zhongyi in Shanghai on Sunday and level the scores at 1.5-1.5 after three games of the FIDE Women's World Championship 2025.

Asia-Oceania WJT: India vs. Thailand for ninth place

India outplayed Sri Lanka 3-0 in the play-off match for the 9th to 12 places in the Asia-Oceania WJT under-14 girls tennis championship Malaysia, on Sunday. India will play Thailand in the match for the ninth place.

Mangalore BC men win rural basketball league

Mangalore BC defeated VBC (Mandya) 90-58 in the final to emerge as the Karnataka rural basketball league champion for men at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium courts in Bengaluru on Sunday.

The result: Mangalore BC 90 (Prastik 31, Shashank Rai 19) bt VBC (Mandya) 58 (Shashank Gowda 20).

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Chhetri's last-gasp strike helps Bengaluru win on aggregate, enter ISL summit clash

FC Goa keeps the contest alive by taking the honours in the second leg of the semifinal with a 2-1 verdict before succumbing

Aneesh Dey
FATORDA

FC Goa won the battle but lost the war, as a 2-1 home win at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on Sunday was not enough to get past Bengaluru FC, which qualified for the Indian Super League 2024-25 final by a 3-2 aggregate scoreline. Borja Herrera and Armando Sadiku found the net for the Gaurs, while Sunil Chhetri scored the all-important goal for the Blues.

The opener came in the 49th minute from a free kick after Sivasakthi Narayanan brought down Ayush Chhetri just outside the box, though the Goa players were certain the contact came inside the penalty area. Borja made no mistake as he rifled the ball into the net past an outstretched Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

Though the Gaurs came close on a couple of occasions, they left it late in the second-half to grab the equaliser. Akash Sangwan found Armando Sadiku with an excellent cross from the left flank, and the Albanian made no mistake in heading the ball past Gurpreet to bring his team back into the match.

With the match poised to go into extra-time, it was Sunil Chhetri who delivered for the Blues. Deep in second-half of additional time, Namgyal Bhutia's cross found second-half substitute Chhetri, who rattled the net with a diving header to seal the win.

It was a defensive masterclass from Bengaluru and another clinical performance from Gerard Zaragoza's men, who had only two shots on target and converted one of them to qualify for the final.

Bengaluru will play the winner of the second semifinal between Mohun Bagan Super Giant and Jamshedpur FC in the summit clash.

The result: FC Goa 2 (Borja 49, Sadiku 88) bt Bengaluru FC 1 (Chhetri 90+2). *Bengaluru won 3-2 on aggregate.*

Saviour: Chhetri, who came on as a substitute, headed in the decisive goal. FSDL/ISL MEDIA

Mohun Bagan banks on home support

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Mohun Bagan Super Giant will bank on huge home support as it prepares to overturn the 2-1 loss against Jamshedpur FC in the second leg of their ISL semifinal at the Salt Lake Stadium here on Monday.

A draw would be enough to secure a favourable goal-aggregate and propel Jamshedpur to its first Cup final.

Given its brilliant home record that fetched it the League Shield before the playoffs, Mohun Bagan will hope to regain the form.

"We are up against a top side which is the champion for a reason. But we have to stay strong, believe in ourselves, and approach the match with a positive mindset," Jamshedpur head coach Khalid Jamil said. Bagan head coach Jose Molina hoped that his team would find the right balance and form to win with the required margin. "We have to try our best as we are playing against a team which defends so well," he said.

Churchill on top, but waits to be champion

I-LEAGUE

P.K. Ajith Kumar
KOZHIKODE

Drama was aplenty on the final day of the I-League.

At the end of it all, Churchill Brothers went atop the table. But bizarre as it may sound, the Goan team will have to wait for a while before it will know for sure if it has won its third I-League title.

That is because the All India Football Federation's appeals committee has to decide on an appeal from Inter Kashi, which demanded it be given three points from the match against Namdhari FC.

Though Kashi had lost that game, it contended that Namdhari had fielded a player illegally. If Kashi wins the appeal, it could win its maiden I-League title, as its points tally would be revised to 42, two more than Churchill.

On Sunday, Churchill drew with Real Kashmir 1-1 at Srinagar. After Lalramsanga gave an early lead to the host, Rafiq Aminu equalised for Churchill five minutes into the second half. The Goans had at least needed a draw to entertain hopes of becoming the champion. Kashmir also had begun the match with an outside chance for the title.

At Kalyani, the Kashi men scored a dramatic 3-1 win against Rajasthan United.

Here at the Corporation Stadium, Gokulam Kerala, the fourth team in the title race, had begun brightly with a two-goal lead, just 11 minutes into the match, but Dempo SC staged a magnificent comeback to win 4-3. Gokulam's Thabiso Brown scored a hattrick, but was outshone by Dempo's sparkling football.

The results: Real Kashmir 1 (Lalramsanga 8) drew with Churchill Brothers 1 (Rafiq Aminu 50) at Srinagar.
Gokulam Kerala 3 (Thabiso Brown 4, 11 & 73) lost to Dempo SC 4 (Cristian Damian 21 & 90+4, Kapil Hoble 34, Didier Brossou 71) at Kozhikode.
Inter Kashi 3 (K.P. Prasanth 12, David Bollo 90+4, Matija Babovic 90+7) bt Rajasthan United 1 (Alain Oyarzun 69) at Kalyani.

Real shades Barcelona in 'Legends Faceoff'

Shayan Acharya
NAVI MUMBAI

Legends from the Barcelona and Real Madrid showed glimpses of their brilliance with the *Los Blancos* eventually clinching a 2-0 win in the Legends Faceoff fixture here on Sunday.

Despite playing all over the world in their storied careers, it was walk into the unknown for most of the legends – including Xavi, Carles Puyol and Michael Owen – as the conditions were new and challenging. But they banked on their experience to beat the heat and offered some spectacular moments to the fans.

As the players were busy with a victory lap, a few young fans breached the security. But as the security personnel shooed away a young fan, Real captain Christian Karembeu called the teenager and handed him his jersey.

The result: Real Madrid Legends 2 (Morientes 14, Barral 69) bt Barcelona Legends 0.

Crawford takes title after Clarke retires with ankle injury

Oliver Crawford SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

TENNIS

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Oliver Crawford claimed the S.M. Krishna Memorial Open title after his injured opponent Jay Clarke retired in the final at the S.M. Krishna Tennis Stadium here on Sunday.

Clarke, the top seed, retired in the first set due to an ankle injury.

Crawford, seeded second, was quick to get off the blocks as he raced to a 4-0 lead within 25 minutes. The Englishman came into the tournament after winning two successive titles in Shenzen and Luan.

Clarke, playing in his fourth final in as many weeks, took a medical timeout to get treatment on his right ankle. The 26-year-old Clarke returned to the court, but could not continue for long.

Crawford was gracious in victory, stating, "Obviously that's never the way you want to win a match or a tournament, but I think it was the right decision for Jay to stop and not cause further damage to his leg."

The result: Final: Oliver Crawford (GBr) bt Jay Clarke (GBr) 5-2 (retired).

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